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THE LIGHT OF DAYS GONE BY.

BY ALICE CARY.

Some comfort, when all else is night,
  About his fortune plays,
Who sets his dark to-days in th' light
  Of the sunnier yesterdays.

In memory of joy that's been
  Something of joy is, still—
Where no dew is, we may dabble in
  A dream of the dew, at will.

All with the dusty city's throng
  Walled round, I mused to-day
Of flowery sheets lying white along
  The pleasant grass of th' way.

Under the hedge by the brawling brook
  I heard the woodpecker's tap,
And the drunken trills of th' blackbirds shook
  The sassafras leaves in my lap.

I thought of the rainy morning air
  Dropping down through th' pine,
Of furrows fresh from th' shining share,
  And smelling sweeter than wine.

Of the soft, thick moss, and how it grew,
  With silver beads impearled,
In th' well that we used to think ran thro'
  To the other side of the world.

I thought of the old barn set about
  With its stacks of sweet, dry hay;
Of the swallows flying in and out
  Through th' gables, steep and gray.

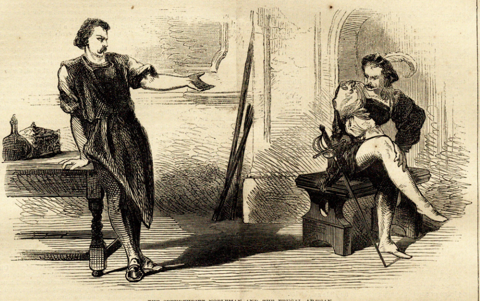
Thought of the golden hum of th' bees,
  Of th' cocks with their heads so high,
Making it morn in th' tops of th' trees
  Before it was morn in the sky.

And of the home, of the dear old home,
  With its brown and rose-bound wall,
Where we fancied death could never come—
  I thought of it more than of all.

Each childish play-ground memory claims,
  Telling me here, and thus,
We called to the echoes by their names,
  Till we made them answer us.

Thank God, when other power decays,
  And other pleasures die,
We still may set our dark to-days
  In th' light of days gone by.

[ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1861, BY ROBERT BONNER, IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK.]



THE SPENDTHRIFT NOBLEMAN AND THE FRUGAL ARTISAN.

VASCO PERES,

THE COOPER OF ALCOBAÇA.

BY A NEW CONTRIBUTOR.

CHAPTER III.

"Be as you would seem to be."

During the morning the sky had been overcast and the atmosphere close and heavy; but now all was clear; not a cloud was to be seen in any part of the azure vault above, and there appeared to be more vitality in all that breathed; whilst the short, but melodious notes of the chapim, a small bluish bird, whose song sounds touchingly sweet towards the decline of day, charmed the ear of the wayfarer.

Vasco allowed his mule to saunter on at a slow pace, leaving it to its own guidance. Though of a cheerful disposition, the young man was often thoughtful; but on the present occasion he seemed to be more than usually pensive. He was musing over the occurrences of the day. He had had many opportunities of seeing Elvira; for he and some of his workmen had often been employed in the wine-vaults of Alcôa to put the vats into proper trim ere the vintage set in, and more than once had he seen and spoken with the lady of Runa, and she would sometimes stand by for a few moments and look on. Vasco thought her beautiful, kind and gentle, as indeed all did who came in contact with her—and then he would think no more about her. But now, as he turned his back upon the quinta, strange thoughts unconsciously arose in his mind, and emotions to which he had been a stranger, caused his heart to throb violently. It seemed to him as if Elvira's beauty had undergone some unaccountable change: there was something in her look, in her very movements, which he remembered not to have seen before; there was that in her smile and in the intonation of her voice, which had heretofore escaped his notice, which had this day for the first time caused a thrill to pass through his frame. Vasco became elated, and dwelt with pride upon the thought that he had saved this beautiful creature from perishing. Had she not spoken to him in tones full of sincere gratitude? Had she not acknowledged that she owed her life to him? Had he not held that delicate form in his arms? But, as a straw placed before the ant while it glides along, will make it suddenly deviate from its course, so likewise the mere recollection of that moment caused a sudden change in the current of the cooper's meditations, and threw a damp upon his spirits.

"Away with such fancies!" murmured he in a tone of sadness, blended with something like sullen haughtiness; "what hath the low-born to do with the beauty of the noble's daughter, or with the fairness of her form, or the silver tones of her voice? His eyes must needs be like the mirror, that casts back the dazzling rays of the sun, denying them a passage; his ears must refuse their functions to the brain. Ay, the brain!" and his voice had sounded harsh and bitter to him who could have heard it; "of that ye would rob us, were it in your power, proud lords! But over its workings ye have no control; ye cannot stay it in its mighty action, nor keep its restless career within the bounds you would mark out for it. Ye may pluck out our eyes; lop our ears, noses, limbs; tear out our tongues; but you cannot touch our brain without also sending us to a better life." And then he continued his speculations in silence; and who can say but that many a thought that has exercised the intellectual faculties of a Plato, a Bacon or a Kant, may not also have flitted across the uncultivated but vigorous understanding of the humble cooper. The bitter words we have just heard him utter, were in nowise consonant to his habitual mode of reasoning; for hitherto Vasco had been contented with his lot, and proud of the results of his industry and perseverance; nor was he prone to pass an indiscriminate condemnation upon his superiors, as a class. It required a more than ordinary stimulation to put him in this frame of mind, and give such a bias to his thoughts.

The hum of voices in the village broke in upon his meditations, and in a few minutes he was at his own door.

After putting his mule in the stable, Vasco Peres entered his house, and there, to his surprise, found Dom Garcia de Cabreira waiting for him. The latter was a man between thirty and thirty-five years of age; somewhat tall, well made and good looking; but there was something in the expression of his brown eye which repelled, and might induce a prudent and observant person to be on his guard. Dom Garcia was the scion of a very ancient and noble stock, which could even boast of royal blood flowing in their veins; for the family of Cabreira claimed to have descended from Ramiro III., King of Leon, who reigned in the tenth century. At the death of his father, Dom Garcia, still very young, had come into the possession of large estates; but they were now all encumbered with heavy debts, in consequence of his extravagance: they were already so heavily burthened that he could no longer raise money on them. His usual abode, when neither at court nor at war, was his quinta of Valverde, some five leagues east of Alcobaça. He was accounted one of the most skilful captains in the King's army, and having arrived at Alcobaça two or three days before, at the head of a hundred and twenty knights and two hundred and fifty crossbowmen, he was now waiting for orders ere joining the main army. The abbot of Alcobaça had offered him the castle for the accommodation of himself and his troops, furnishing all that was requisite for their maintenance at the expense of the convent.

"Ah! Senhor Dom Garcia, this is an honor I did not look for," said Vasco, as he entered the room.

"Methinks, Vasco, that many days like this would make thy fat purse shrivel up, and turn thy busy workshop into a nest of lazy drones; the master's eye makes the horse fat, says the proverb. Beshrew thee, man, 'tis twice I've found thee out since morning, although the day has still two hours to run," said Cabreira, springing from his seat like a person who has been for some time impatiently expecting another.

"I trust your patience has not been taxed too far?"

"I have whiled away an hour, heaping curses on our foes, and putting up prayers to St. George in our behalf. By the way, it is lucky we have renounced Santiago and left him to the Castilians, else the good saint had been sorely puzzled how to succor both sides without taking the field against himself."

"It had, indeed, been a case hard to solve, even for a saint," replied Vasco, smiling. "But if your suit is like to have been heard, as I dare hope, then it is well I procured you this leisure, fair sir; not to mention that my delay was unavoidable."

"Ay, I have heard of thy gallant exploit, Vasco. Out upon dame fortune for a most freakish, perverse lady! That was a fair chance lost to me, for I swim like a duck; and it should have fallen upon me to have saved the life of one who is like to become my wife some day," said Cabreira, laying a stress upon the last words, as if he would have the cooper understand that such was his expectation. "But no! it must needs be thee, who can in nought be advantaged therefrom. In truth, I am sore vexed."

"Nay, Senhor," replied Vasco with a smile, in which something like a sneer was perceptible, "fortune should not be taxed when she scatters her favors, a kindness to which she is not very partial. Since you already possess the heart of Dona Elvira, and make so sure of her hand, wherefore grudge this service I was permitted to do her?"

"Because gratitude would have prompted her to oppose no further delay to our union," answered Dom Garcia.

"But it is given out that you are definitively engaged?" observed Vasco, putting on an innocent air.

"Undoubfedly—that is to say, there is a moral engagement, though no betrothment has taken place. The uncertainty of the times has induced Dona Elvira to postpone.—But this is nothing to the purpose; another object brought me hither, friend Vasco."

"I am at your service, Senhor."

"I would have thee lend me fifteen doubloons."

"How so! have you run through the ten I lent you on the day of your arrival?" exclaimed Vasco in a tone of astonishment.

"Had I not, I should not have troubled thee now," replied Cabreira very coolly.

"My lord, you are free to make what account you will of money; to scatter it abroad as you list, as that which is lightly got; or to see in the glitter of gold something too resplendent to be kept long under the eye. But he who labors through the day that he may feel the want of it, must needs view matters in a different way. Neither the times, which threaten the working man with ruin, nor the amount of my earnings would warrant me in advancing you such large sums for the future."

"How, sirrah! thinkest thou the loans will not be repaid? Dost thou forget that my father's bounty kept thine from starving more than once?"

"I have so far been mindful of it," said Vasco with dignity, "that I have lent you, within the last two years, more than twentyfold what my poor father ever cost the kind-hearted Dom Sancho. The total of your debt to me is no less than sixty-five doubloons."

"Thou talkest, forsooth, as if we were equals. A doubloon will go farther with one like thee or thy father than a hundred with one of my rank. Thou mightest as well weigh the crumb that satisfies the cravings of the sparrow, against what is devoured by the hungry eagle at a meal."

"Whereby you would imply that *my* debt is not yet paid?" said Vasco.

"Nay, I claim no debt; 'tis a fresh loan I ask."

"Tell me, Senhor: did you not request me to keep these matters from the world?"

"Undoubtedly; there was no reason why the world should know them."

"I thought as much, and I held my tongue; but while cautioning me, you showed but little caution yourself."

"What art thou driving at, man?"

"I would merely warn you that my men know that you have borrowed money of me, which amounts to saying that the whole place know it."

"Belike, thou hast been slyly boasting of this?" said the lord of Valverde, angrily.

"Nay, credit me, that is not my wont. You were your own tell-tale; you let the coin tinkle as you left my house two days ago. Besides, it seems this has been suspected for some time back."

"And where didst thou learn this?"

"In the workshop, from my own people. There are some among them with sharp ears and keen sight," replied Vasco.

"But of course thou didst deny?"

"My lord, Vasco Peres was never known to lie. I endeavored to treat the matter lightly, and to dispel their suspicions; but when they insisted, and flatly dared me to deny, I could not but admit that which I knew to be true."

"And is my character and dignity to suffer thus?" cried Dom Garcia, in a towering passion, while taking long strides up and down the room. "And am I to be the theme of village scandal! a topic for ill-mannered churls and gossiping old women! a by-word, to be taught their saucy, half-naked brats! Shall it be said that Dom Garcia de Cabreira, Lord of Valverde, the descendant of kings, was reduced to the necessity of begging a few doubloons from one of thy condition!"

"Senhor, if the pill be kept in the mouth too long, it must needs offend the palate. But yet your secret has been kept two years; and if it is out now, you have only yourself to blame. In truth, the best is never to do that which you would blush for the world to know."

"I came not hither to be tutored by thee, sir cooper! dost apprehend?" cried the fidalgo, furiously.

"Perfectly, noble sir," replied Vasco, ironically; "you would have me keep my counsel locked up, and my coffer unlocked, with its contents at your service."

"Trifle not with my anger, knave; else thou mayest rue thy temerity!" screamed the Lord of Valverde, as he seized a stick that stood in a corner, and raised it with a menacing gesture.

The eyes of the young cooper flashed fire, his brow contracted, the veins in his forehead began to swell, and his teeth were so firmly locked that the muscles of his jaw bones stood out. With folded arms and closed lips he steadily eyed the Lord of Valverde. There was such defiance in the look and the attitude of Vasco Peres, that an impartial spectator would have supposed that Dom Garcia thought it as well to provoke no further the storm which was brewing in the breast of the affronted plebeian; for, dashing the stick to the ground, his fury suddenly subsided, whilst his face assumed a sullen expression, as if he were vexed with himself. But the truth is, that Vasco's posture had not intimidated Dom Garcia, who, whatever his other faults might be, was no coward; it had only served to call him to his senses. He was the more vexed at his ill-timed outburst of passion that, though naturally of a sanguine temperament, he was used to have his irritability under such control, as but seldom, if ever, to let it run riot; at least not in the presence of others, whereby he was generally noticed for his coolness and nerve.

"Hark you, Senhor Dom Garcia," said Vasco, after a moment's pause, and in a stern tone of voice, "henceforth seek money elsewhere; none of mine shall again soil your hands. Not only have you borrowed the plebeian's coin, and then told him to his face that you deemed yourself dishonored therein, but you have ventured, in my own house, to call me a *knave*, and threaten me with a stick. It is well for you you went no further, for, as I live, 'tis like you had lost the most at that game."

"Come, friend Vasco; forgive a moment's irritation. What amends dost thou require? for I have wronged thee."

"This suffices," replied Vasco, with dignity.

"And now that we are friends again, wilt thou lend the money?"

"What, you repeat such a request, after what has been said!" observed Vasco, contemptuously.

"But it is urgent that I should have it; and I know not where to apply for it in this place."

Vasco seemed to reflect for awhile, and then said, in a decided tone:

"I'll let you have the money, on one condition."

"Name it."

"That you promise never to ask me for more."

"So be it, since it must needs be so. I'll trouble thee no more," replied Cabreira, who saw by Vasco's tone that there was no other alternative.

A few minutes later, the Lord of Valverde left the cooper's house, after having received the fifteen doubloons; and if we would know the motive that was strong enough to induce a proud man to humiliate himself in the manner described, we have only to follow his steps.

After crossing the bridge close by the convent, Dom Garcia walked on at a hurried pace towards the castle, which, as I have already stated, was situated on an eminence to the north of the village. About twenty minutes brought him to it, and having passed through several large apartments, he came to a small corridor, which led him into a moderately sized room, in which was a table surrounded by about a dozen individuals, and upon which might be seen several heaps of gold and silver coin. These were a few knights or squires belonging to the company of Dom Garcia, engaged at their usual afternoon pastime.

In those times, military discipline was very different from what it became more recently; nor was the limit which now separates the officers of the higher grades from those of the lower observed at the period of this story. There were then no regular armies; for the first innovation of the kind, made by Charles VII. of France, some two score years before, would scarcely come up to our notion of a regular, disciplined army. In time of war, most men were expected to take up arms, according to the exigencies; hence the *esprit de corps* was a feeling unknown to any breast, and social rank alone determined the amount of consideration each man might claim. The reader will not therefore be surprised to learn that several of those present were simple knights or squires without any special command, though all of them were of illustrious and noble birth.

"Hold, Nuno Viegas! here comes Dom Garcia," cried one of the players to a young man, who was rattling the dice as if on the point of throwing them.

"Ah! Garcia, better late than never," said Nuno, familiarly, as he paused; "seeing thy run of bad luck, we feared thou wouldst fail us."

"Nay, you shall know me better. I'm no runaway; nor does the spirit of the trader, who ventures nought against blind chance, move in me. Come; it gives me promise to see thee caster, Nuno; thy throwing often favors me. There, I'll lay this with thee;" and the Lord of Valverde put down five doubloons.

"Agreed," answered Nuno, rattling the dice in the box.

The game, which had been for a moment interrupted, soon warmed up again. Nothing was heard but the rattling of the dice, the deadened sound with which they fell upon the table, the proposal and acceptance of the bets in a few laconic words, or an occasional curse from a loser who hadn't his temper under his control. But if little was to be gleaned from the voices of the gamesters, the play of their features spoke volumes. Here might be seen the anxious gaze of a loser, as he eagerly watched in order to catch the first glimpse of the dice as they fell from the box, his eyes protruding from their sockets, his brow ruffled, and distilling cold drops of perspiration, his nostrils quivering, his lips slightly apart, as if ready to utter an oath or a cry of joy. Yonder stands another; the smile is upon his mouth, his eyes glisten with delight, his countenance betrays the hight of satisfaction; he has been winning heavy stakes; but lo! the fatal dice fall, the color recedes from his cheeks, and disappointment, almost dismay, alights upon his face—he has lost. But he soon rallies, doubling his stakes, for he still trusts in his run of good luck. Yet there were a few who stood calmly by, their eyes alone indicating that they took any interest in what was going on; and, however much the inner man might be moved—as much, perhaps, as those that allowed their feelings to appear on the surface—a spectator who had not followed the course of the game could not have pronounced with any certainty whether they were winners or losers. The most conspicuous of these was Garcia de Cabreira. There were occasions when the others were off their guard, but Cabreira was impenetrable.

At first his fortune had fluctuated; he had won and he had lost, won and lost again, but not a muscle of his face was seen to move. There was a moment when he was at the lowest ebb. Many others with a like resolution, but less schooled in the arts of self-control, might have acted as Cabreira did, though with every sign of desperation; whereas he, with a quiet smile and the utmost composure of manner, took the three last doubloons, which was all that remained to him, and laid them out at a single venture. He won; he doubled his stakes, and won again. Fortune now seemed to prosper him. About an hour had elapsed since Cabreira had joined the play; something like a hundred doubloons were next to him, the result of his winnings; he had just laid a heavy stake, and the caster was preparing to throw, when the door opened, and an attendant entered the room.

"There is one without who waits to have speech of my lord," said he, addressing Cabreira.

"I will consent to see no one at present, unless he be a messenger from the king, the constable, or my lord the abbot, or the lady Dona Elvira," added Dom Garcia.

"I think he comes from none of them, Senhor; he only bade me deliver you this ring," continued the servant, advancing and handing a gold ring to the lord of Valverde.

The latter took it and examined it closely; as he did so, a look of surprise was perceptible on his face, but was instantly checked. Then, rising, he begged of the company to excuse him, and to go on with their play without waiting for him, as he might possibly be detained. Finally, requesting Nuno Viegas to take charge of his money, and to give him an account of the result of the bet he had pending, he left the room.

CHAPTER IV.

"Vice ruleth where gold reigneth."

Giving orders that the messenger might be conducted to his private apartment, Cabreira repaired thither himself, and a few minutes later a young man was introduced, dressed in the usual habit of the peasantry.

"Thou comest from João Gonçalves de Ataide? And who art thou? for, now that I observe thee more closely, thy looks belie thy habit," said the lord of Valverde, after the servant had retired, closing the door behind him.

"The ring assures you who it was that dispatched me hither: my name is Vicente de Morão, and I am squire to João Gonçalves; this garb was put on as a shield against detection," answered the other.

"And what message do you bring, Senhor Vicente?"

"First, I was charged to ask whether you would consent to meet João Gonçalves?"

"Most assuredly; I would gladly embrace my old and cherished friend, if he thought he could venture without danger into these parts, and still more willingly if he means to join us, and become again my companion in arms. But I learnt that the king of Castile reached Leiria early this morning. João Gonçalves must be with him, I suppose?"

"You are right in one point, Senhor; we arrived at Leiria a little after sunrise, for we marched over night so as to avoid the excessive heat of yesterday. But João Gonçalves has left Leiria, and is now close at hand."

"Where is he, then?" asked Cabreira, earnestly. "Why did he not come hither at once?"

"Why, Senhor, you well know that he is of these parts, and had he come in the midst of these people, he might have been recognized even under disguise, so he sent me, as being a stranger here."

"True, true. And know you what he wants with me?"

"Of that I am ignorant; he only bade me tell you that, if you would see him, you will find him at the old mill of Froilão Vasques; he was ascending the hill when I left him."

"I know the place. You can depart, Senhor *escudeiro*, and when you are gone, I will hasten to the spot to meet my friend. No better time could have been chosen, for night draws on apace. Here, take back the ring. Farewell to you."

A few minutes after the departure of the squire, the lord of Valverde, throwing a cloak across his shoulders, also left the castle.

João Gonçalves de Ataide was a Portuguese fidalgo, who, from the first, had joined the party maintaining the cause of the king of Castile, or rather that of his consort, Dona Beatriz. Part of his lands lay near, and to the north of Alcobaça, where he had usually made his abode before the breaking out of the war. From their childhood upwards, he and Cabreira had been friends and companions until political events separated them. They were also of about the same age.

The place of rendezvous was an old, ruined windmill, long since abandoned, situated on the top of an eminence lower than that on which the castle rested, and further to the north than the latter, being separated from it by a valley, excepting where they were both connected by a ridge, which, taking a curve on one side, reached from summit to summit. It was across this ridge that Cabreira directed his course, treading a path which, from its appearance, seemed to be rarely used. A short walk brought him to the mill.

It was now quite dark. The stars were shining, but their dim, uncertain light barely sufficed to prove to the night-wanderer that this part of the hights was a desolate waste, unfit for the ploughshare or the hoe, from the rocky nature of the soil. As Cabreira arrived upon the little esplanade or platform in front of the mill, a figure issued from the latter, and advanced towards him.

"Garcia!" said the figure, in a low tone.

"João Gonçalves!" answered the new comer.

The two friends embraced each other, and words of greeting were exchanged on both sides.

"As I live, I should not have recognized thee, even in broad daylight," continued Cabreira, surveying his friend, who, like Vicente de Morão, was disguised as a peasant.

"Hadst thou met me and Vicente on the road as we jogged on, bestriding two sorry hard-worked mules, I warrant thee thou hadst taken us for two of the veriest churls thy eyes had ever fallen upon," replied João Gonçalves.

"And prithee, what could prevail so far as to put thee in such unbeseeming guise?"

"A most urgent matter, Garcia."

"Hold! Let us first make sure there are no idlers or cavesdroppers about," said Cabriera, proceeding to cast a searching look around, and examining such places as looked suspicious.

"Oh, for that matter, have no care, said his companion, in a reassuring tone; "I have been here more than half an hour, concealed behind those ruined walls. For the rest, 'tis such a lonely place as that none would be like to pass this way, and this is what made me pitch upon it for our meeting." Then, as soon as Cabreira, having satisfied himself that no one was about, returned to him, he continued: "When we parted, thou wert wavering between Castile and the Duke of Viseu, but thou never dreamedst of helping to make a king of the bastard João; nor surely did any take it, then, that the scope of his ambition extended to a crown."

"Even so; we made no doubt but the then protector of the kingdom meant to hold it in trust, abiding the return of his brother from Castile," replied Cabreira.

"But when his true design leaked out, how came it that thou didst persist in standing by him? Once all hope was gone for João of Viseu; when he and his claims were confined within the narrow compass of a dungeon; when only two competitors remained, the one being the rightful successor to the late king, the other without any lawful claim, whose success would only make him an usurper; how come it, I say, that thou didst not instantly raise thy voice and arm in defence of the legitimate cause, standing up for dona Beatriz?"

"Sparing all discussion," replied Cabreira, "I premise by asking thee in my turn, João Gonçalves, whether thou dost remember the day on which I sought to know what moved thee to elect the cause of Castile and refuse to bind thyself to that of João of Viseu, while holding that he had the better right? Methinks thou didst make answer to this effect, that Castile was the stronger of the two and most likely to prevail; yea, more, thou didst try to work me to go with thee. Say I well?"

"It may well be," answered Ataide; "but why this?"

"To let thee know that our aim was the same; thou didst trust more in Castile, and I came to put my trust in João of Avis. It was the siege of Lisbon that decided me. When I saw a large army—which on its arrival was elated with hope, deeming the subdual of the city passing easy—forced to decamp, leaving their best captains and the flower of Castile's nobility food for the crow and the raven, I set it down as beyond a doubt that the crown of Affonso Henriques would never encircle the brow of Juan I., of Castile."

"I admit that at the time such a conclusion was plausible; but what sayest thou now? Darest thou think the handful of men that follow the grand-master can cope with the serried ranks and numerous squadrons Castile is bringing to bear against them?"

"By my troth, I can hardly tell thee what I think; 'tis a very debatable question, and one I've put to myself more than once of late. Your forces are the larger, more than four times ours—I have it from a good source; but the best captains are on our side. Of your three chief captains two are Portuguese; Dom João Affonso Tello, Count of Barcellos, can split a lance as fairly as most good knights; but methinks he can lay no higher claims as a commander. Dom Pedralvares Pereira, grand-master of Calatrava, judging by his merits, might without disparagement serve as squire to the constable, his brother. Touching the Castilian, Nunes de Guzman, grand-master of Alcantara, he is not much better as a leader. Now, we have Nunalvares, the constable; and where's his match to be found? Then there is Vasconcellos and Antão Vasvues, both——"

"And thyself, Garcia, by no means the least of them," said Ataide, breaking in upon his friend's speech.

"Nay, thou wouldst rate me too highly; but let this pass; and have we not besides Dom João himself, and what's your Juan beside him?"

"Not much in respect of prowess, though he be my liege lord. Nevertheless, he who wants large odds on his side has a fair promise of victory."

"There's the point; 'tis this that makes the issue doubtful."

"I might tell thee that which, peradventure, would make it less doubtful to thy mind, Garcia," said Ataide in an impressive tone.

"If thou hast wherewith to sharpen my understanding, it were the part of a friend to set to the task at once, João Gonçalves."

"'Tis sure the grand-master means to impede us on our way south? 'tis no feint on his part?" asked Ataide.

"It were madness in him to let you reach Lisbon," replied Cabreira.

"Consequently a battle is inevitable; for we shall not retrace our steps."

"It is precisely what we all expect."

"Now, thinkest thou not, Garcia, that this battle will prove decisive?"

"Most undoubtedly; the winner will have a lease of the crown of Portugal during his life. If beaten, Juan of Castile could not bring such another army in the field for many a year."

"And João of Avis is now on his last venture," added Gonçalves.

"It is even as thou sayest."

"So far we have agreed in most things," said Ataide, "now let us consider this, and see if the sequel partakes of a like harmony. If Avis gain the day, he will have little to give to those who fought for him; for such lands as were liable to confiscation, have been forfeited, and most all of them disposed of. But victory would bring in a rich harvest to Castile; many goodly estates would be seized, proving a plentiful source whence the king would enrich his friends without impoverishing himself. Might not the promise of an ample share of this spoil help to open the eyes of the doubtful, or at least give the cue regarding the side on which hazard lies the heaviest, especially supposing one whose all is so beset with creditors, as in truth to make it his but in name?"

"Hast thou warrant for putting these hypotheses, or is this merely idle talk, João Gonçalves?"

"Well, suppose I had full warrant?"

"'Tis the supposition of a supposition! well, let it pass—I will follow thy example and suppose also. Supposing, then, I were such a one as thou here represent, I should say a mere *promise* were not worth giving ear to."

"And granting it were more than a promise—a pledge or surety as undoubted and tangible as could be offered?"

"That might alter the case, and make it worth the while for some to listen to it."

"And wouldst thou harken to a like proposal?"

"Even were I not to harken, I must *hear* it; of all our senses, saving smell, that of hearing is the least subject to volition," was Cabreira's answer.

"Then I need not bid thee listen, I'll speak out. Among the estates to be confiscated are those of the constable; the king means to reserve a small portion of them for restitution to their former possessors; but thou hast only a word to say and the rest shall all be thine."

A pause of a few minutes ensued. This brilliant offer surpassed Cabreira's highest expectations; for the constable's possessions were, even then, very extensive. The Lord of Valverde was ruled by an insatiable cupidity; yet was it not avarice; he loved not money for money's sake; he loved it because he could not do without it; he had constant need of vast sums to satisfy his master-passion, and to meet his extravagant expenses at court. His heart glowed with delight at the prospect thus unexpectedly offered him; an eager, feverish, vehement desire seized upon his soul, urging him to grasp at the bait. But this was confined to the secret recesses of the inner man; he still kept a tight rein over the expression of his feelings.

"And what word is it, I should have to say?" asked he at length, in a quiet tone of voice.

"Pledge thyself to Castile's cause."

"And the surety?"

"Here it is," replied Ataide, producing a parchment scroll, with a heavy waxen-seal dangling from it. "It is an *alvará*, bearing the royal seal and signature, whereby Don Juan, as King of Portugal, confiscates about two thirds of the constable's lands, each separate property mentioned by name, and makes them over to thee and thy heirs forever."

"Now, what does the king expect me to do, should I, peradventure, accept of his proffered bounty?"

"Don Juan does full justice to thy worth, Garcia; thy high reputation is not unknown to him, the proof whereof stands in this parchment. He does not will thee to join him for the present; for he could not vest in thee the power and high command he would wish, and thy known merits warrant, on account of the jealousies which would ensue, and might prove fatal to this his present undertaking; but he has assigned to thee a duty of no less importance, and it may well be of some risk and difficulty. The plan devised, and which I am commissioned to make known to thee, is this: that thou do pretend loyalty to the grand-master till the day the battle take place, and then, watching a favorable opportunity, pass over with thy men to our side. This would so dishearten the grand-master's remaining force as to ensure an easy and perhaps bloodless victory."

"Hence, it follows that not even numbers make you as confident of success as you would wish to seem," observed Cabreira.

"In truth, Garcia, there is too much of a foolhardy confidence in the mass of the army; they imagine the foe can be swept away like chaff before a gust of wind—an assurance which, if not checked, would breed a rashness and contempt fraught with danger. This, together with the bickering and jealousies between the Portuguese and Castilian fidalgos, has greatly alarmed several of the old counsellors who surround the king. Pedro Lopez de Ayala has even counselled him to avoid an engagement for the present, an advice which has not obtained. But these fears of the grey-headed ones are natural, though exaggerated and ill-timed; when the hour comes for action, these slight difficulties will disappear, and a move on thy part would secure the victory to us, and to thee a fortune." Ataide feared not to disclose these facts to his friend, being already confident of the success of his mission.

"The plan is promising," replied Cabreira, after a few moment's reflection; "there is, however, one slight, but not insurmountable obstacle. Most of those under my command evince great steadiness in their loyalty—it is of the knights I speak—the foot soldiers would go whithersoever I led them; but twenty of these are not worth one good lance. I could not, therefore, venture to broach the subject to them; but I can involve them in such a way as to take them over in their despite. When my moves shall have placed them in such jeopardy as they must either be cut to piecies or rally to my sudden war-cry of *Castella y Santiago!* they will take this course—at the worst, they would all fall prisoners, which would have just as good an effect, and prove no less disastrous to Dom João's cause."

"Bravo! this will do admirably," cried Ataide, joyfully. "Here! wilt thou take the *alvará*, or shall I bear it back to Leiria?"

"Nay, give it; for my last word is: Juan of Castile, I am thine!" and as he spoke, the treacherous Cabreira seized the parchment in his left hand, while doffing his cap with the other, which he raised on high.

"Answered as I could wish!" cried Ataide.

And the nefarious compact was sealed by an embrace.

"And now, Garcia," said Ataide, "ere I depart, I must, as a friend, apprize thee of that which will be news to thee, and show the necessity for thy immediate marriage with Dona Elvira Forjaz; yea, even before the battle take place, unless thou wouldst forever lose her."

"And why such haste, João Gonçalves?"

"I'll tell thee; but never breathe whence came the information. Thou knowest that the constable's brother, Diogo Alvarez Pereira, now in high favor with Juan of Castile, was a suitor for the hand of the lady of Runa."

"Ay, just before the war broke out, and was refused."

"Well," continued Ataide, "the king has pledged his royal word that if he conquers the kingdom, she shall become the wife of Diogo Alvares."

"This shall never be!" exclaimed Cabreira, with unwonted vehemence.

"Make thy words true by marrying her without further delay," said Ataide.

"Know, then, João Gonçalves, that I am no further advanced in her good graces than Diogo Alvares—she has flatly refused me."

"Then how, in Heaven's name, canst thou prevent the king from making good his promise?" asked Ataide, with a look that argued utter astonishment.

"In this way: either the king must recall the pledge he gave Diogo Alvarez, and secure to me Dona Elvira's hand, or our bargain is at an end. I, for my part, renounce the constable's estates on condition of our marriage being guaranteed; otherwise, I am still for João of Avis."

"Thou art mad, Garcia! Bethink thee, man; how can the king fall back from his royal word? Much as he esteems thy services, this would be paying too high a price!"

"Then all is finished between us—here, take back thy scroll," replied Cabreira, doggedly.

"O, fool that I was to mention this!" exclaimed Ataide, in despair. "But wait!" added he, as if a sudden thought had struck him, "the matter may be settled without going to such extremes; and all to thy greater advantage, Garcia."

"I would gladly learn how," observed Cabreira.

"Thou thinkest there is no way of winning her by fair means," asked Ataide.

"I fear not; indeed I am convinced of it?"

"Well, wouldst thou compel her to marry thee, if thou hadst the means?"

"Ask the eagle that espies a hare asleep upon the heath whether he would pounce upon it or no! But wherefore speak of an impossibility? After getting her in my power, there is no priest among my kith who would consent to second me."

"Would it be possible to get her to Coz?" asked Ataide.

"Friend, it might be difficult; but most things are possible where the mind is not warped by what fools choose to call scruples. But wherefore this question?"

"Hast thou never heard of one Padre Marcos of Coz?"

"I have; and some idle tongues are niggard in their praise of him; albeit their charges amount not to much," replied Cabreira.

"Well, know, then, that he is the man for thee; for a well filled purse he'll do thy business."

"Art thou sure of this?"

"Of nought am I surer. I have full good reason to know what I advance. The only difficulty would be the witnesses, for in this I cannot serve thee."

Cabreira made no immediate reply. His quick mind, which possessed the faculty of discerning with remarkable facility all the phases of a complicated situation, saw at a glance the new avenue that lay open before him. A brilliant future loomed in the distance. His fortune no longer depended upon the uncertainty of arms. Once united to Elvira, and with her vast wealth in his grasp, he might play a double game: if probabilities were with João of Portugal, he might keep his faith with him; if his calculations failed, and Castile proved victorious, he might go over before the day was entirely gained, but after the decisive blow had been struck. Whether João of Portugal or Juan of Castille prevailed, he, Cabreira, had his fortune secure; and in the latter event, to the estates of Elvira he would unite those of the constable. All this was fixed and settled in his mind with incredible rapidity, and ere many moments had elapsed he renewed the conversation.

"Art thou acquainted with padre Marcos?" asked he.

"As well as with thee; I have known him for years, and know more of his affairs than most people."

"Seeing this, there would be no better agent found to break the matter to him; so take heed, João Gonçalves, on thy return, in passing through Coz, call upon him. Let him be prepared to perform the marriage ceremony this very night: I shall be there sometime between one and three o'clock after midnight, with Dona Elvira. He shall receive two well filled purses before the act, and, later, as many more as he please to name."

"Leave this to me, Garcia; all shall be prepared against thy arrival. He is not from home, for I saw him strolling about as I passed through erewhile, though he could not recognize me in this garb. I shall not give him thy name, for fear of failure; there will be time enough for this on thy arrival. Do thou merely mention my name to him. But the witnesses?"

"These I have, safe and sure."

"And canst thou depend upon thy means of conveying the lady there?"

"Have no fear, I'll not make the priest wait: my head never fails me when I bid it work. Ere midnight Dona Elvira shall be on the way to Coz."

After a few more words the two schemers separated: Cabreira returned to the castle, and Ataide descended the hill, at the foot of which he found Vincente de Morão waiting for him beside the two mules.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

◆

INDISPUTABLE.—The greatest pleasure of life is love; the greatest treasure, contentment; the greatest possession, health; the greatest ease, sleep; and the best medicine, a true friend.

THE DRUMMER BOY.

A SKETCH OF THE WAR OF 1812.

A lovely summer day was closing. Already the sun had set, and the crimson had faded from the sky, giving place to the pale amber tints that were fast fading into the pearly gray of advancing night.

Near the roadside stood an old gray farmhouse, on whose low, sloping roof mosses grew and house-leeks flaunted. Small windows, set deep in the brown walls, still reflected the last rays of the western sky, while from those belonging to the ample kitchen the ruddy light of the cheerful wood fire on the hearth was glancing. The day's work was ended. The toilers, who had lingered through the cool twilight upon the porch, one by one withdrew to seek their couches. Elizabeth Howland, the farmer's daughter, returning from a visit to a neighbor, stopped beneath the maples that shaded the gate, and sat down to rest. Although scarce five miles away, upon the shores of the lake, lay a large military force, the agricultural districts were seldom disturbed. Mounted patrols occasionally dashed along the country roads, or orderlies, bearing dispatches, hurried in the direction of the scattered outposts during the day; but, as the chief danger of the enemy's approach was by water, the country was left in almost entire quiet after nightfall.

Darker and darker grew the night. But still Elizabeth, absorbed in sad and anxious thoughts, remained beneath the trees.

Along the white road a black object moved silently and swiftly towards her, but she observed it not. Nor until it approached and stood almost at her side, the figure of a small man or half-grown lad, did she see it, or even hear the light footsteps upon the sandy road.

Hidden herself by the trees, the lad, for such the advancing figure proved to be, did not perceive her until he had turned aside beneath their shelter. Then she started swiftly to her feet and confronted the youth as he was about to throw himself upon the very bench upon which she had been sitting.

With an exclamation of intense alarm, the youth started aside and turned to fly. But the girl's hand arrested his progress. At that instant the clouds that had gathered in the east emitted a sudden glare of lightning, and she saw that the frightened wayfarer was but a boy, clad in coarse soldier's garb, with a pale, terror-stricken countenance fair and gentle as a girl's. He was not one to inspire fear, and the girl was a patriot at heart, and ready to minister to the comfort of the least of her country's defenders; for that country's sake, and his whom she had seen, not long before, march away at the head of his company to meet the fate of war.

"Don't be afraid, boy," she said, in her gentlest tones. "You see I am only a girl, and cannot harm you even if I would. You have lost your party, I suppose, but come in. My father will give you shelter from the storm, and in the morning you can easily join them."

"Oh, no!" he said at last, chokingly. "Oh, no! I dare not go in. I only wished to rest here a moment. Before morning dawns I must be far away. They will seek me then, and I must be far beyond the lines."

"But no one will harm you, poor boy," Elizabeth began.

"Yes, yes they will, they must—they will send me back, and I shall die if I cannot soon see my dear home, and my mother and sister again. Oh, why—oh, why did I ever leave them?"

Elizabeth saw it all now. This gentle, fair-haired boy—this gently-nurtured mother's darling, had been lured by the pageantry of war, or had the romance of his young nature fired by tales of battle-fields and human bravery, until he had left his home for the dreadful realities of a soldier's life. He had pined for home and love till, in a moment of greatest despondency, he had risked his life by becoming a deserter from his post.

He was in the greatest danger, she knew it, felt it, and his only safety was in flight beneath the shelter of the darkness. And yet, even while she revolved these thoughts in her mind, he had sunk down upon the bench, utterly wearied and exhausted.

Elizabeth's first impulse was to arouse her father and have the poor lad conveyed to the house, but a second thought convinced her that he would not be safe there, since among the farm laborers there might be one or more whose mercenary disposition might lead to his betrayal for the sake of the reward offered for the arrest of deserters. No, his secret must remain with her alone.

She left him, and hastened to the house. Quickly and silently she procured food and restoratives, which she brought to him. Rousing him, she compelled him to swallow a small portion of spirits, and then led him away to the large barn that stood near the house. She had brought a small lantern with her. This she lighted when she had groped her way, with her charge, into the barn, and closed the door. Then she pressed food upon the reviving boy and made him climb upon the hay which nearly filled the barn to its roof. She then placed food beside him, showed him how to cover himself with the hay so as to be completely hidden, and yet have space for air, and light when the morning came; she assured him that she would visit him again in the morning, and cutting short his thanks, left him to the repose he needed.

Hardly had she returned to the house and crept in silence and darkness to her couch, than a party of dragoons, with jingling accoutrements and loud voices, rode slowly past.

From their conversation, distinctly audible in the stillness, she learned that they were seeking a deserter, and had tracked him by his footprints along the high road until the darkness had made that no longer possible. She trembled for the poor fugitive, but her hopes rose as the party rode on, and the deep silence of night again closed around her.

Next morning Elizabeth was early astir, but she dared not visit her prisoner until the men of the household had all gone afield. Then she went to the chest that stood upon the landing outside her mother's room, and selecting from its contents one of several nicely folded suits of clothes that had been the property of a brother who had died in his boyhood, she made a small bundle of these sacred mementos, which she felt that she was devoting to a worthy cause, and taking this, and a plate containing breakfast for the fugitive, she hurried to the barn. Looking about her as she reached the entrance, she thought she had been unperceived, and securing the door she made her way to the summit of the haymow.

The boy started up as soon as he heard the sound of her voice. He looked even younger than the night before, and very pale, though a small bright spot of red burned in either cheek, and his blue eyes had the restless glare of fever or insanity. He received Elizabeth with a bright, but fleeting smile, and eagerly received the food she offered, though, after the first mouthful, he turned from it with loathing. He was too ill, or in too great terror to eat, though Elizabeth kindly pressed him to do so.

She stayed with him as long as she dared, soothing and encouraging him, and listening to his story of his mother and sister, who lived in a distant city, and knew nothing of his fate. He had been more than a year from home, and the longing for it, and for his mother's caresses, had at length triumphed over all fear of consequences. And thus he had become a deserter.

Elizabeth started guiltily as, on descending to the barn floor, she saw one of her father's men, Charles Benson by name, busily engaged in mending a rake in one corner. She was hurrying past him without speaking, when he came forward and addressed her.

"I thought I heard voices somewhere," he said, "but I supposed the children might be hunting eggs in the haymow. Was there any one up there with you, Miss Lizzy?"

"The children have all gone to school," Lizzy replied, ignoring the question addressed her. "But I have been hunting eggs, and see, I have my pocket full! As to voices, you might have heard me repeating the poem I learned the other day from the newspaper."

"Repeating poetry, or reading Captain James Grey's last letter, I suppose—all's one to me, I'm sure. I hope the captain's well."

"He was very well when we last heard from him," Elizabeth said, making her escape, and trusting that the conversation was ended. But her tormentor called after her, to know if she had brought out "that chaney plate to put eggs on," and when she muttered something about "food for the late chickens," laughed louder than ever, and remarked that he "never knew before that chickens required a knife and fork to eat their food with." Elizabeth made no answer to this impertinence, but hurried into the house, with a very uncomfortable misgiving lest the man had discovered or suspected her secret. She knew not how long he had been there, nor how much of her low-toned conversation with the fugitive he might have overheard.

All day she watched and waited for another opportunity to see the lad, but in vain. It was not until near sundown that Charles Benson finished the tasks that had kept him in the neighborhood of the house, and then he only came in and prepared, as he said, to go to the village, as it was too late to work any more in the field. She would have watched him out of sight, but her mother called her to some task, and ere that was finished, the farmer and his men came in to sup. Elizabeth was kept busy, and it was almost dark ere she could steal away.

Then she hastened to the barn, and found her prisoner just awaking from the slumber that had occupied most of the day. He seemed refreshed and hopeful, and having put on the garments she had brought him, was ready to set out as soon as the night should be dark enough to make his flight secure.

Elizabeth bade him farewell with a sister's affectionate interest. He was so gentle and winning, and above all, so young to be in such terrible danger, that he had taken the girl's heart captive. She dreaded to leave him, and yet knowing she must, she pressed her lips to his brow, and pressed a little purse containing her savings into his hand, and, with many tears and misgivings, left him alone. These misgivings were hightened by the boy's account of a dream he had—a dream that, as he lay sleeping, covered by the hay, it had been pulled aside, and a man's face had bent over him. But he treated it lightly as a vision of slumber, and she tried to hope that it was no more.

And yet if Charles Benson had discovered the fugitive! If he were already gone to betray his hiding-place. She was sorry she had not urged the boy to leave at once, instead of advising him to wait until the moon had set. But it was too late now; her mother was calling her, and she could not return to the barn without exciting suspicion. It was a sad heart that she carried to her room.

Elizabeth did not retire. She sat beside the window watching, hoping, as minute after minute glided away, to see the boy's dark form emerge from the barn, and steal along toward the woodland. But the moon was shining brightly, and she herself had told him to wait. Once she started up, determined to go and hasten his flight, but at that moment she thought she discovered a dark form stealing along the wall below the garden. She thought he had escaped them, and sat down breathing more freely. Her head leaned upon the window-sill, and, wearied with watching and anxiety, she had fallen into partial slumber, when a sound reached her from the barn. Four or five dark figures were moving near the door, and the gleam of a musket barrel caught her eye. In another moment loud voices reached her ear, and then a shriek from the boy's clear, youthful voice, so full of terror and despair, that she never forgot it until her dying day.

The household were aroused, and came rushing to the yard in time to see the party of soldiers, with a sergeant at their head, and the prisoner in their midst, file into the road. Charles Benson was there, and as Elizabeth came up she heard his voice in angry expostulation, and the sergeant's reply:

"Yes, here is your reward, you scoundrel! May every dollar you have earned by betraying this miserable baby burn into your soul! Go now—not another word! I consort with informers only when my duty bids me, and that was hard enough when I thought we were to take a man, and not a poor child like this, who never should have left his mother."

Benson slunk away, not noticing the glance of loathing Elizabeth cast upon him, as, unmindful of the soldiers, she went up to the boy who, hopeless now, stood still and proud among his captors, and pressed another kiss upon his brow.

"Poor boy," she said, "I would have saved you, but I will pray for you still. Sergeant," she added to the officer who stood apart, "must you take this child to a deserter's fate?"

"I must do my duty, Miss," the old man answered, respectfully, and something like a tear twinkled on his cheek, as the moonlight fell upon it, "but I never had a harder one than this."

He turned, placed himself at the head of his men as they fell in, and gave the order to march. Soon the tramp of their feet died in silence in the distance. The group who remained in wondering comment looked about for Benson. But he had disappeared, and was seen no more in all the country.

Next morning the pretty drummer boy met the fate of a deserter. Kneeling upon the ground before the file of men detailed to fire the volley of death, he listened in silence to the prayers and admonitions of the chaplain. When the good man rose, the boy asked to have the portrait of his mother shown him once more. His arms were pinioned, but the clergyman took the picture from his pocket and held it before him. He pressed his lips to it more than once, the tears he had till then bravely stifled rose to his eyes. He begged the good man to send it, with his best love, to Elizabeth Howland. The sign was given, and in another moment the roar of guns was heard, the kneeling form sprang high in air, and fell a bleeding, lifeless corpse.

But for Elizabeth's consoling letter, the mother of the drummer boy would never have learned his fate.

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HOW IT IS DONE.—In the list of the prosperous there are very few indeed who owe their advancement to talent and sagacity alone. The majority must attribute their rise to a continuation of industry, prudence, and good fortune.

LITTLE SPIRIT.

Little spirit, will you come
From your home so high and bright
And dispel the heavy gloom
Lying round me like the night!

Oh, to see you near me stand,
Little spirit, fair and meek,
And to feel your gentle hand
Round my neck, and on my cheek!

Little spirit, do you love
More and better in your sphere?
Have you truths and ways above
Any that we know of here?

Are your skies forever fair?
Know you no rough jagged ways?
May no shadow reach you there
From your few and evil days?

Little spirit, can you hear
My low questions, in your sky?
Can you to my soul draw near,
And its longings pacify? El Mina.

MY UNCLE'S WILL.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

"Joanna is nine years old to-day," my mother said, looking at my father, with gloomy unsmiling eyes.

Child as I was, I felt that my birthday was no festival season to my parents. I colored and shrunk abashed as my father answered, with a glare of almost savage rage in his eyes:

"And we have yet nine years to wait! Nine ages in this abode of desolation!"

"Yes, and what an ugly little creature it is," my mother rejoined, lifting her eyeglass languidly to look at me, then dropping it with almost a shudder, and raising her fine eyes with an expression, half-hopeless, half-imploring, toward the ceiling.

My father muttered something about the uselessness of showing off "airs" in such a spot, and then both went on eating their breakfast, as if they had not done that cruelest wrong of inflicting a mysterious, but not less poignant, pang upon the heart of an innocent child.

As soon as I could, I crept away from the table to ponder in solitude the thoughts that oppressed me. Why did my birthday always cast such a shadow of gloom over the household? What was that goal, nine years away, so anxiously awaited? Was I, then, as ugly as my mother had implied—would every one who saw me shudder at the sight?

A heavy burden this, of thought for a head that but nine years had passed over, but it was to be borne alone, for I had no friends, no confidants, no childish playmates. I lived alone, with my parents and two old servants, as harsh and silent as they, in that desolate old house on the wide flats near the sea. I had never known any other home, though I had learned, by chance words, dropped from my parents' lips as they impatiently chafed the invisible chain that bound them to this seclusion, that much of *their* lives had been spent in far different scenes.

I longed for the love, for the caresses, the fond care that other children received but which had never been bestowed upon me. I had not passed the boundaries of childhood before I gained the assurance that my sole consequence to my parents arose from the fact that I was in some way the instrument by which they were to be released from their hateful seclusion, and restored to the station and condition from whence they had fallen. How this was to be accomplished, I was not told, but I somehow learned that it gave me power—the substitute I was forced to accept for a child's true influence in the home circle.

As I grew older the angles and sallow tints of childhood vanished. The agues and tertian fevers, born of the foul mists and marshy exhalations amidst which I lived, tortured me no more. My form rounded into symmetry, my brow was fair, and my cheek was blooming. My mother ceased to shudder and cast appealing glances to Heaven at sight of my ugliness, and my father, no longer savage though impatient, pronounced the laconic sentence that I "would do."

The mystery of my life was not yet explained, but my eighteenth birth-day approached, and I had been too long taught to look forward to that as an important era of my, of our life, to doubt that the solution would not be long delayed.

As it came near the old cottage was smartened as much as narrow means would permit, both as to its exterior and interior condition. My mother and myself had new dresses from town, and my father at evening performed the unwonted luxury of a dinner toilet, and appeared at table in the garb of a gentleman instead of that of a game-keeper.

A week before my birth-day I found, on going down, a stranger standing with my father before the breakfast-room fire. My father came forward and saluted me with a kiss, as I have seen other fathers do since, but as he had never done before; and then he presented to me my "cousin Claude Leveridge, who had arrived late last night."

We had never had a guest in our house before, and, prepared as I had been for an arrival, I greeted the stately man who bowed before me with a courtesy as proud as his own, I doubt not, but with an awkward blush that I felt crimsoned cheek and brow, and tingled in the very hand that, in obedience to my father's sign, I laid in his.

He addressed a few sentences of light badinage to me, then turned to address my mother as she entered. As he bent over the fair hand she offered him, I saw that he was no longer young. Time had thinned his locks and left many a silvery thread shining about his temples, while deep lines marked his face, and wrinkles nestled about his eyes.

I knew well that this guest, this hitherto unknown cousin, was somehow connected with my fate. I began to wonder if he would take me away from my dull, sorrowful home—if we all should go—if he were very rich, and would establish us in a splendid house such as I knew my mother had inhabited in her youth. Then I thought he might have a wife, perhaps daughter, whom I should see and learn to love. In fact, I quite adopted this latter theory, and resolved to ask him, at the first opportunity, why he had not brought them to visit us.

My father left us as soon as breakfast was over, and then my mother and our guest settled down to a long conversation about the people and the world from which the former had been so long banished. I was a listener, for I could take no part in such topics, and I learned that Cousin Claude had resided in Europe for many years of his life, returning to his home only for brief visits. Still, when at home, he had mingled with the society my mother had once known, and had much to tell her of it, and of his European experiences.

He spoke quietly of some scientific and some social triumphs he had attained. There was even a tinge of sadness in his tone as he mentioned them. My mother detected it, for she said, almost compassionately:

"Even in the midst of this career, Claude, you must have been lonely. It was not the life wholly fitted for you—it was an existence perverted, though not as ours has been."

"You speak truly, madam," he replied; "but," glancing at me, "I may soon hope to claim my reward, may I not, and you——"

"Hush," my mother said, hastily, and she laid her hand upon his arm, and shot a warning glance toward where I sat, beside the window.

Their voices sank to whispers, and I rose and stole out of the room.

A terrible unrest seized me. I trembled in the anticipation of the revelation that awaited me. I could not remain in our weed-grown garden, but tying on my broad hat, started, in the full glow of the warm spring noontide, at a furious pace along the high clay road that led to the fields whither my father had gone. I meant to seek him and tell him that the time had come when I must and would know all—that I was no longer a child, nor to be treated as an irresponsible being.

What more I might have done or said I know not, for from other lips, ere that day's close, the revelation was to be made

Swiftly as I walked, a swifter step followed me—a man's long, firm stride, that annihilated the long reaches of the yellow road. I heard the sound, and turned, with a flushed face, to meet Claude Leveridge.

"I have come to join you in your walk, and what a chase you have given me, little cousin," he said, smiling, but breathing fast from the haste in which he had walked. He fell in by my side, and began to talk to me quietly of things I well understood, till, presently, I felt as if he had been an acquaintance of years, and asked as well as answered questions.

"Why did you not bring your wife and daughters?" I said, at last.

Claude stopped, turned and looked steadily in my eyes.

"Are you serious?" he asked, after an awkward silence. "Have you really been kept in such ignorance, or is this assumed for effect?"

He turned away, and I heard him murmur: "The mother was a schemer ever, can it be that this girl is like her?"

"Did you not know that I have neither wife nor child?" he asked, turning to me again.

I returned his gaze steadily, and answered: "Truly, no. You are as old as papa, and I thought there might be those belonging to you, whom I could know and love, for indeed I am very lonely here."

"I have nobody. I have only myself. Do you think, now that you know me a little, you could ever learn to love *me?*"

There was a smile on his face, but a red glow mounted over it, and he trembled as he regarded me. My eyes fell beneath his gaze, but no ray of enlightenment reached me.

"I am sure I shall love you, cousin, very much. You will come to visit us sometimes, will you not?"

"No, I shall never come here again," he answered; "but if you choose you can go away with me, and live with me always. Do you think you could do that? Do you think you could be my wife?"

I glanced at him in surprise. His wife—he was as old as papa, and his locks were gray—in short, in my seclusion, the thought of marriage had never been presented to me. We walked on in silence until we came to the high ground where trees grew, and tempered the growing heat with their cool shade.

Beneath one of these, upon a fallen log, Claude seated himself at my side, and told me all the story of my strange life, and lifted the veil of mystery which had hitherto enveloped it. When he had finished he said, "Now you know all, Joanna, and you see that the fate of many persons—their worldly prosperity—rests in your hands. As my wife, the fortune remains with us, your father and mother are amply provided for, you are removed to scenes better adapted for your happiness, you are in the hands of one who will know how to guard and care for you in all the untried circumstances of your new life, who will love you as a husband, and counsel you as a father. Dispassionately I should say that your happiest course lay in accepting me, because you insure large worldly prosperity to yourself and to those you are bound in duty to consider, because you place yourself in your own proper sphere and station, because I know myself to be an honorable man, well fitted for the responsibilities your decision would devolve upon me. On the other hand, I see a taint of selfishness in my words. Your young beauty tempts me, the fortune you secure to me tempts me, and I question myself whether I have a moral right to seek to bind your youth to my declining years, though, without you, they must be passed in comparative poverty, no small sacrifice to one who has known only luxury. Only since I have seen you have I learned to feel all the embarrassments growing out of our uncle's strange will.

He paused, and I, who had been revolving in silence all he had said, answered calmly. "I am to accept you, then, before my eighteenth birthday, or all this wealth goes to swell the coffers of various scientific societies and wealthy colleges; my parents are still poor, condemned to this dreary life; you are impoverished, and I am forever shut out from all hope of a higher earthly existence. Is it so?"

He bowed his head.

"I see papa coming," I said. "I will go to him, and to morrow morning I will inform you of my decision."

He kissed the hand I extended to him, then drawing it within his arm, led me to my father.

I shut myself in my room that day, and spoke to no one. I knew, now, how my parents had always regarded me—less as a child than as the instrument of their release from poverty.

They must be freed, I saw that, clearly, but perhaps I need not be married at once. I decided the question quickly enough that I would accept my cousin, had I had but a little more experience I should have known that my reluctance to a ratification of my vows, arose from a doubt whether I could love the husband I felt compelled to accept.

The next day the dear old house was filled with smiling faces—no gloom sat on any but my own, and I kept my sadness for the solitude of my own room. A week later, the day following my birthday, Claude went away. In another month my parents and myself left the old house forever.

We took up our abode in the splendid house where my uncle had lived his lonely, useless life. Here we were soon surrounded by the élite of town and society. I had young companions of my own sex, in plenty; but I found them shallow and frivolous. I had lived in thought, they in the externals of a giddy existence. I liked the young men no better. Claude grew daily in my esteem and affection. I became reconciled to a lot that would secure me so kind and constant a friend. I learned to lean upon and trust him—he was counsellor, guide, friend, as well as lover.

We were married and I was happy—a brief bright happiness. The month we had allotted to travel was not passed when I brought home his mangled remains—crushed out of all human semblance, by that dreadful railroad collision that shocked the country that year, only to be repeated the next, and entered the home he had prepared for his bride, clad in the garments of widowhood.

I remained in my solitude some years—years that I devoted to the improvement of my mind. I was twenty-two when I again re-entered society. I was still young and not unattractive, and I was rich. I need not have remained a widow long, but I was in no haste to marry; above all, I meant, if ever I resigned my liberty, it should be into the hands of one whom Claude might have approved.

And at last I found such an one, or he found me. More truly, I suppose, a mutual and inexplicable attraction drew our spheres into contact. We knew not of each other's existence, as we know things here, until we met, but our souls were no strangers even in that hour. They mingled then into one—a bond of sweetest unison was formed, of which marriage was but the external symbol, and in pefectest accord all the years of our life have since been passed.

Claude must have loved this man, and often I think that he looks upon us, from that other life to which he has gone, and smiles upon a union that realizes all that he ever dreamed of the conjugal tie with all its highest meanings and purposes.

A LIVING BURIAL.

BY DR. S. COMPTON SMITH.

One night, while one of those bitter "northers" of the month of June, 1846, was strewing the Texan coast with the wrecks of vessels engaged in transporting troops and supplies to our army, it happened to be my regular turn for guard mounting; and in spite of the thick Mackinaw blanket I had thrown about my person, the cold wind and freezing sleet pierced to the marrow of my bones; and on returning to my tent, after guard relief, on the following morning, I carried with me an ague that threatened every moment to shake the very teeth out of my head.

Scarcely had I thrown myself, faint and exhausted, upon my wet blankets, than I was attacked by the prevailing camp epidemic, which after a few hours assumed the more terrible and alarming type of cholera. While writhing with the fierce spasms, that racked every fibre of my body, I was conveyed by my comrades on a blanket to the crowded hospital tent, and consigned to the care of the inexperienced young surgeon and his volunteer assistants.

But in spite of "Number Six" and the rough manipulations of the hospital attendants, my terrible spasms continued, causing me the most excrutiating agony. Had I been broken on the wheel, my sufferings could not have been more intense. At length, after several hours of the most acute tortures, the cold, cadaverous perspiration of the collapse stage of cholera, began to exude from my excoriated surface; and as my physical prostration increased, with the same ratio, my nervous excitement subsided, till all pain was gone, and I lay motionless and scarcely breathing upon my pallet.

The attendants, under the directions of the young doctor, had toiled most manfully at the skinning process, till they had become as exhausted as myself—and I fancied I heard expressions of satisfaction from them, as they desisted from their labors, when informed by the medical man that it was useless to proceed any further, as I was then past recovery.

"Poor fellow!" said the kind-hearted surgeon; "he's a goner; he's past all human skill, and the 'dead march' will be playing for him before night! Have a blanket ready, boys, to sew him up in!"

And saying this he turned away from me, and walked away to the open air.

But although speechless and motionless, and I believe breathless, I still retained consciousness; and with extraordinary acuteness of perception, was observant of all about me. I could hear every groan uttered by my sick companions, and took in every word whispered about myself. Some turned their faces towards my blanket, and spoke kindly of me, others jested unfeelingly, and said I had been mustered out of the service before pay-day had come round; while another replied in what he considered a witticism, that the Paymaster General would settle my arrearages.

"I say boys," suggested another, "suppose we swap blankets with him. His is a new one; he drew it from the Sutler's only last week, and this ere old un's good enough to bury a fellow in!"

So saying, the speaker, who was lame from an accidental rifle-shot, tossed his worn out and tattered blanket towards me, and reaching for a corner of my new Mackinaw, appropriated it to his own use.

This cool robbery of the dead, as they then supposed, was looked upon as a good joke, and was applauded accordingly; and it was owing to this trade of blankets, in which I was not consulted, that doubless I am now permitted to pen this article.

Shortly after this transaction, the doctor returned, followed by my captain. The latter looked around the tent, as if searching for some person he could not readily discover, when the doctor pointing to me, said:

"That's the man, Captain Bennett."

"That's not one of my men," replied the captain.

"Yes, sir! That's Benson, or rather what was such, half an hour ago!"

"Is it possible! Is that Benson, my company clerk! My God! what a change this terrible disease has wrought in the poor fellow! How long Doctor, did you say since he breathed his last?"

"About half an hour or so," was the reply.

"I could have better spared a better man!" sighed the good captain, as he raised one hand to the corners of his eyes, and walked out of the tent. But as he reached the entrance he turned and inquired:

"At what time shall I send round a burial-party, Doctor?"

"In half-an-hour, if you please," was the answer; "for it will take the boys about that time to sew the body in his blanket."

"Great Father of Mercies!" I mentally exclaimed, they are about to consign me to the dark, cold grave, while I am yet in possession of all the faculties of life, save those only of motion!" and never till my *really* dying hour can I forget the thrill of horror that shot through my soul at that fearful thought. It seemed as if the crushing weight of a mountain had been hurled down upon me, and yet I lived. Dante's Inferno, with all its terrific horrors, never appeared to the over-excited imagination of the poet as did the awful visions that reared themselves to my mental eye. I was frozen with the extremity of terror! Living to myself, with consciousness never before more active and perfect, yet dead to all those about me. They were in a hurry, even, to remove what they considered was already a festering corpse, from their midst. Already my shallow grave was dug in the chaparral, and even my comrades were preparing for the solemn procession! In vain I tried to cast from me the frightful incubus that weighed me down. Paralysis held me as in an iron vice; the paralysis of a portion of that cerebral apparatus, termed the 'motor tract;' while the nerves of sensation remained in tact, or rather more exquisitely sensitive than ever before, when in perfect health.!

Again the doctor approached me, and placing his hand, glowing with animal heat upon my cold and clammy face, attempted to close my eyes—but the swollen and corrugated lids had refused to be pressed down, and gazed with a fixed stare upon his own, and essayed in vain to throw something of my agonized sensations into my motionless orbs. For an instant, my heart almost beat again, at the hope that I had attracted his attention; but after a cold, professional examination of the pupils, he turned carelessly away; and I heard him give the order to sew me up for the grave.

At that time and place lumber of no description was attainable, and coffins were unheard of in the army. Dead officers and private soldiers were unavoidably served alike, and no other winding-sheets were procurable for either than the same camp blankets on which they had breathed their last.

> "No useless coffins enclosed their breasts,
> Nor in sheets nor in shrouds we bound them."

As the attendants approached to obey the order, I made one more desperate attempt to burst the iron chains that bound me. I essayed to cry out in the bitterness of my agony; but my tongue seemed frozen to the roof of my mouth, and was utterly immovable. The fierce struggle that then convulsed my spirit it is impossible for human words to describe! I felt a clammy dampness streaming from every pore of my body; so profuse was it, that the men observed it with evident disgust; and as they proceeded with their ungrateful task, I was certain I had thrown into my limbs a slight degree of muscular motion. But so absorbingly were they engaged in their work, that they paid not the slightest heed to this evidence of lingering vitality, but hastily proceeded, till at length the last stitch had been taken; and, enclosed in a tight-fitting sack, like an Egyptian prepared for the tomb, I was laid along the ground, to await the arrival of my comrades to bear me to the chaparral.

My horrible fate now seemed irrevocably sealed, and I ceased to struggle with it. My doom was inevitable! So strong indeed became this impression—so utterly devoid of hope was my situation—that my soul was now plunged into a depth of calm, resolute despair, and I prayed to God that death might suddenly come, to rescue me from further lingering sufferings, and that I might cease to exist while this comparative calmness was upon my soul.

I could not have remained long in this condition when I heard the measured tread of feet approaching me; and then the familiar voice of my orderly sergeant, as he gave the order to halt, and in a few low-spoken words directed his men to place me upon the rudely-constructed bier. I felt myself lifted gently from the ground and placed upon the rough crossbars of the tottering machine, which had already borne many a poor fellow to his long home, whither also my bearers doubted not they were about to convey me. Then I heard the order to march; and the plaintive notes of the softly-blown fife, and the muffled drum, floated upon the breezeless air, and fell upon my senses like a healing balm. The sweet but melancholy music seemed to vibrate through my brain with the force of galvanism, and I am sure it was not a cadaverous sweat that bedewed my cheeks, but tears—warm, gushing tears! and with a mentally breathed prayer to Heaven, I was now wholly resigned. O! how the sweet melody of that "death march" thrilled through my soul, and seemed but the prelude of that sublime song of welcome which was to greet me on the other side of the dark barrier I was so soon to pass!

With regular and measured motion I felt myself borne along, and exquisitely sensitive was its external impressions, that I was conscious of every bush and tree by which I passed; and the cool shadows of the chaparral fell upon me like the chilling breath of the late norther.

When the procession, moving with slow and solemn step, at length reached the grave, and the melancholy dirge had ceased, I heard the low muttered words of my comrades, as they spoke kindly of me, or commiserated my early death; and one, it was my messmate Harry Waters, with one hand resting on my breast, read aloud, but with trembling accents, the solemn and impressive service for the dead, appointed by the church. Then I was lifted from the bier, and with gentle hands placed safely in the "narrow house."

The grave was found too shallow, and it was proposed to lift me out again and dig it deeper. But fortunately for me, as the sequel proved, Sergeant Fry objected to this, upon the plea that doubtless as soon as the news of my death had reached my friends at home, they would probably remove the body. And so I was suffered to lie, while my comrades heaped the light sandy soil carefully upon me.

As I felt the cold earth upon my breast, and over my face, and the last rays of light were shut from my eyes, my desires for life returned again with a hundred fold more force, if possible, than ever, and again I essayed to struggle. But as before the effort was in vain; and in a few minutes I felt the last pats of the shovel upon the finished mound; and even then, buried as I was in two feet of earth, I heard the order to the men to form in platoons on each side of the grave, and prepare to fire the last parting volley over me.

It was to that friendly crack of the rifles, that burst in a simultaneous explosion, that I am indebted to life; for the sudden concussion seemed to rend my brain, and the violent shock, like a current of electric fluid, shot through my frame, and instantly restored the action of my suspended circulation; and once more, blessed be the God of Heaven! I found the use of my tongue!

The porous earth did not entirely exclude the air, and from the grave I shouted aloud for help. But had I been above ground, and my lungs in perfect health, my friends could not have heard me; for at that moment they had resumed their march, and were moving campward to the step of a cheerful and noisy tune.

As soon as I found the use of my hands, I strove with violent efforts to free them from the tight swathings in which I was bound; and, thanks to the heartless wretch who had substituted his own rotten blanket for my new "Mackinaw," it soon gave way! And then slowly, but with desperate struggle, I dug the soil from my breast and face; and, Heaven be praised! once more the warm, glorious light and air of the upper world were mine!

But this terrible effort was too much for my exhausted frame, and I must have sunk into a lethargic but refreshing sleep; for when I again recovered sensation, the cold, calm moon was streaming down through the scattered branches of the mimosas above me, and the silence of the grave was about me. The cool, fresh, night air entered my lungs with the invigorating effect of a tonic cordial; and, as I gradually gained strength, I drew myself limb by limb from that living grave. After several unsuccessful attempts, I at length, with the aid of the surrounding thickets, gained my feet, and with slow, faltering steps, reached the open plain, upon which was gleaming the low and nearly consumed fire of our camp. In my enfeebled state it seemed a long journey to perform; but finally I reached the lines just as the "grand rounds" were abroad.

It were long to tell, the astonishment of all, and the horror of some of my comrades, when, at reveille, the report of my resurrection spread through the camp; and the incredulity of many who, after calling to gaze upon my altered person, would not be convinced till they had examined my vacant grave, and heard from my own lips the story of my living burial.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

There are persons, whose reverence for religion is so morbid that they can hardly lift up their eyes to heaven, but make it up by the way they look down on their fellow-men.

It may be that sorrows shall turn to riches; for, in God's husbandry, heart troubles are not wounds, but the putting in of the spade before the planting of seeds.

Paradox, though dear to most people, is usually the talent of the superficial, the perverse, and the obstinate.

With every child we lose we see deeper into life, as with every added lens we pierce farther into the sky.

Without the ebb and flow of our passions guided and moderated by a beneficent light above, the ocean of life would stagnate.

We are prisoners as often as we bolt our doors, exiles as often as we travel, and dead as often as we sleep.

The prolongation of a life that shortens myriads of others, is prayed for by the conscientious and pious.

The last years of a vicious man are ever miserable. An ill-spent life, like an ill-worn shoe, runs down at the heel.

In a single bloody day, an army may be contracted to half its size; the greatest of army-contractors is battle.

With some, genius, like the bird of paradise, is all wing; it can never alight and settle on anything.

Every witticism is an inexact thought; that which is imperfectly true is imperfectly witty.

Superficial men have no absorbing passion; there are no whirlpools in a shallow.

It is far better to suffer than to lose the power of suffering.

Obscure writers, like turbid streams, seem deeper than they are.

Some of our poets mistake, in themselves, the freckles of the hay-fever for beauty-spots.

Persecution follows righteousness; the Scorpion is next in succession to Libra.

A proud man is always an ungrateful man, for he never thinks he gets as much as he deserves.

The best ornament of a country is the sight of creatures enjoying their existence.

We are never satisfied that a lady understands a kiss unless we have it from her own mouth.

If you don't lay out your plans of life betimes, you will probably be laid out before they are.

Don't marry an attorney; it must be a sad thing to be hung to a limb of the law.

Railroad trains are protected from accident as houses are from lightning—by good conductors.

It is not so pleasant for nations to mingle their blood in battle as by intermarriages.

The greatest difficulty that an artist has in drawing crowds is to get them to sit.

Every woman's rights are marriage-rites; every traitor's rights, funeral-rites.

Tears at a wedding are only the commencement of the pickle that the young folks are getting into.

It is said that the wheel of fortune revolves for all; but many of us are broken on the wheel.

Many Christian flocks are greviously wronged. Their pastors devour the products of their pastures.

It is often a nobler work to conquer a doubt than a redoubt.

All our laws would seem to be bankrupt laws; they are *broken* every day.

The worst of all kinds of eye-water is a coquette's tears.

Danger should be appreciated; none are insensible to it but the senseless.

If a man cannot do his duty in the situation he is in, he cannot do it anywhere.

It is not in brutes that we find most brutality.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A young man, employed as a clerk in a grocery store up town, one morning lately found a bundle of bank notes, amounting to two thousand dollars, hidden in an empty barrel that stood outside the door of the grocery; he at once resolved to appropriate the prize, and commenced spending the money freely, but his career was soon cut short by a charge of passing counterfeit money, and in order to clear his character of *that* imputation, he had to tell how he came by the bad bills; the result was, he was discharged from arrest and from his situation as clerk at about the same time.

Three young men were rowing across the East river one afternoon, just as the Sound steamers for Fall River, &c., were passing, and thinking to have "a little sport," they foolishly rowed close to the side of one of them, and their boat becoming unmanageable from some cause, the stern of it was struck by the wheel of the steamer, and dashed in pieces, and the foolhardy young men were sent flying into the water, from whence they were rescued by a man who happened to be near in another boat.

A lady living in Twenty-third street, having occasion to go down town one afternoon a short time since, left her babe in charge of a new servant girl; on returning she found the little thing insensible and pervaded with an odor of laudanum, and on investigation discovered that the girl had dosed the child with that drug in order to keep it quiet, that she might "run over to her cousin's." A physician being called immediately, he succeeded in saving the child's life, but its health stands a chance of being forever affected by the poison.

A number of young ladies and gentlemen, living in Brooklyn, went out riding in buggies a short time since, and as they were passing along Flatbush Avenue, one of the horses became unmanageable, and several of the teams getting tangled up, owing to the inexperience and incapacity of the gentlemen who were driving, a couple of the buggies were backed off the avenue into an excavation, and their occupants were so severely injured that they had to be carried home.

A few mornings since, a little girl, whose parents reside in Twelfth street, was pretending to throw her doll out of a chamber window, and then hauling it back as though she had rescued it from a fall; at last she dropped the doll, and in attempting to catch it, she leaned so far out of the window as to lose her balance, and fell headlong to the pavement, fracturing her skull and occasioning her death in a few hours.

A lad fourteen years of age, who was employed in an oyster-saloon in the Bowery, while cooking some oysters, a few days since, attempted to replenish the cooking apparatus with alcohol without extinguishing the flame; an explosion resulted, covering the unfortunate boy with a sheet of fire, and burning him so seriously that he soon died.

A man was arrested and sent to the Tombs, the other day, on a charge of beating his wife to death, while she was in a situation that should have insured to her the most delicate and endearing attention from a husband. She died in great agony, after giving her testimony as to the cause of her death.

Half a dozen sailors, just arrived in port, got into a hand to-hand fight with a number of rowdies a few nights since, near the foot of Roosevelt street, in which the latter were most severely handled, three of them having their faces so badly bruised that they could not see.

One of the porters in a wholesale grocery store in Front street was crushed to death one day recently, by the falling on him of a hogshead of sugar that was being hoisted from the cellar to the first floor—the rope of the hoisting apparatus having broke.

A Commissioner of Deeds of this city was recently prosecuted for conniving in the execution of several fraudulent conveyances, whereby a confiding client was to be swindled out of his property by a dishonest attorney.

As a number of boys, on their way home from school, in Williamsburgh, were fencing with sticks, one of them thrust his weapon into the eye of a playfellow, and injured it so badly that it was feared the sight would be forever destroyed.

A lad about seven years of age, who was crippled by club-feet, in attempting to cross Canal-street, at its junction with Broadway, was run over by an omnibus, and one of the wheels, passing over his breast, crushed him to death.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1861.

THE CAUSE OF THE ENORMOUS AND UNPARALLELED CIRCULATION OF THE LEDGER.—We pay more money for contributions by popular and eminent writers, in order to make a great and good paper, than is paid by any ten other literary papers in the country; and, as a legitimate result, our circulation is larger than the combined circulation of any ten others.

WE always stop the LEDGER at the expiration of the year, or the time for which it is paid, so that if you wish to continue it, it would be well to renew your subscriptions at least one week before the time expires.

NO TRAVELLING AGENTS.—We employ no travelling agents. If any party pretends to act as such you can put him down as a swindler.

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"THE WHITE TERROR."

Our readers will doubtless remember the pleasure with which they sometime since perused in the LEDGER the stories of "*The Lost Deeds*" and "*The Mysterious Marriage*," which met with such unbounded popularity. We have received many letters from our readers, asking us when we were going to give them another story from the same popular pen; and it is with much gratification that we now have it in our power to announce that in the next number of the LEDGER we shall begin a story by the authoress referred to—MISS DUPUY—entitled, "THE WHITE TERROR," which is one of the most weird, strange and exciting Tales we ever read. It is full of romance, witchery, mystery and terror; and the young, lovely and heroic heroine is one of the most bewitching creatures whose adventures ever thrilled the human heart, or whose sufferings ever dimmed a sympathetic reader's eyes with tears.

* * *

OUR HARBOR OF LATE.

New York harbor, beautiful as it is at all times, has lately presented scenes unusually animated and picturesque. Off the Battery lay at anchor, the other day, a powerful fleet of a dozen ocean steamers, all in the service of the United States, preparing to convey to the Southern coast the great Expedition. These vessels, black and grim, were anchored close together a half a mile from Castle Garden, which is now as unlike a garden as one object can be unlike another. Flitting about among the ships were man-of-war's boats, ten-oared and blue-sailored (to speak in the revived Homeric style) as well as minute steamboats carrying off little mountains of baggage and small stores. The great flag-ship, with its line of port-holes, was farther off than the rest of the fleet, indicating that it was to be the leader of the floating host. A little way up the Hudson River might be seen a hundred large ships waiting for a wind with enough west in it to enable them to get clear of our dangerous coast. Lower down the bay were a great number of vessels newly arrived, brought in by the easterly winds, the captains of which had no notion of giving their crews a chance to slip off into the town by coming too close in shore. The oldest habitué of the Battery never before saw such a display of shipping in the harbor. The tow-boats from Albany were obliged to get rid of the greater part of their train in order to get from one river into the other.

There are other signs of war about the harbor. The green slope of Governor's Island is dotted with the tents of a regiment who guard the prisoners taken at Hatteras. The prisoners may be seen peeping through the port-holes of the old red fort, and strolling about the shore, clad in a great variety of costumes. They certainly have the luxury of looking out upon the most lively and beautiful scene in the world—whatever they may need in the way of necessaries. At Staten Island there are several camps, and a general appearance of military preparation. Fort Lafayette, at the beginning of the Narrows, completely surrounded as it is by water, has a most prison-like and uncomfortable look. But its inmates can never want for amusement while daylight lasts, as the entire foreign commerce of the port glides into the harbor under the guns of Lafayette.

Another warlike spectacle is afforded in the harbor by the large steamboat loads of troops that are daily transported from the city to the ancient port of Amboy. Upon a day of sunshine, this has an exceedingly brilliant effect.

* * *

WALKS IN THE WOODS.

The flowers of Autumn have died on their stalks, but the woods have burst into bloom. The wood-paths are over-arched with glowing wreaths, and ever drifting through the silent spaces, the glorified leaves of the chestnut, the maple, the oak, the hickory and the ash—flame-colored, scarlet, crimson, purple and umber—fall fluttering to the ground, already sprinkled with them as with many-tinted flowers. Who would lament the loss of Summer's roses, could he always wander at will amid such beauty and magnificence as Autumn drapes the woods withal. There is nothing to compare with this efflorescence of decay, in all the abounding bloom which Nature bestows upon floral vegetation in the vigor of its prime.

And how delicious the woods smell at this season—how spicy. It is as if the death-stricken leaves were embalmed. And as you wander along, that feathered sprite, the mottled, scarlet-crested woodpecker, flits beside you from one dry tree to another, beating his tattoo at every resting place. The robins have not yet met in solemn convocation and determined to start for Dixie's land. Their crimson and orange breasts may yet be seen in the woods, and the pigeons are at their fall feast of acorns. As to the squirrels they are holding jubilee over the nuts. So there is something to be seen in the woods, besides rainbow leaves.

We know of no finer thinking place than the forest at this season. It is a place for self communing, for deep meditation. "The groves were the first temples," we are told. The woods with their tall columns and natural aisles, their great arches and solemn cloisters, no doubt suggested the first idea of Church architecture. But how stiff and hard are sculpture and carving compared with the flowery lines and living beauty of the embellishments of the "first temples," fashioned, finished, beautified by the Omnipotent Architect. Let us tread them wonderingly, reverently, and adore their author as we behold them clothed upon as with the pomp of radiant sunsets, in the Autumn of the year!

* * *

ECONOMY AND FASHION.

Necessity is sometimes a useful instructor, and she is at present engaged in teaching the ladies of New York and other cities how to dress becomingly and even elegantly at a moderate cost. We venture to say that their expenses for the Fall and Winter fashions this year will not be much more than half what they were in 1860, and yet we never saw the lovely *habitués* of Broadway look lovelier than they do now. Lyons and Paris do not relish this economy; but that is of small consequence. Retrenchment is the order of the day, and we are glad to see that the ladies realize its importance in the present crisis. We have no doubt they are astonished to find how much money may be saved by a little ingenuity and painstaking in the dress-making and millinery line. A thousand dollars a year in pin-money is really not indispensable to a fashionable appearance. A couple of hundred will do just as well. It is not necessary to sweep the sidewalks daily with velvet and brocade; merinos, valencias and warm, comfortable ottoman cloths are better adapted to the purpose, if the work must be done. If it were safe to make a suggestion on the subject, we might advise that this kind of brooming had better be dispensed with altogether, and that if fashion would take a reef or two in her ample skirts they would wear longer and look less bedraggled at the base. Our women have the prettiest feet in the world, and the dress makers have no right to smother them—all of which we humbly submit to the collective wisdom of the fashionable world, for grave consideration.

* * *

HIGH-LIFE SNOBBERY.

We are constanly hearing of the "palatial dwellings" of New York, which are always spoken of with a degree of reverence and an air of triumph that seem to indicate that the honor and glory of the country mainly depend on them, and that we poor mortals, who simply live in *houses*, can never exhibit sufficient gratitude towards the "merchant princes" who rear those pretentious edifices. Now, these princely residences may be very fine things; we certainly cannot gainsay such a presumption, because we never lived in one of them; still, we think that when a "merchant prince" has built himself, or hired some one to build for him, a "palatial dwelling," he should be content to dwell in it quietly and unostentatiously, and that he should not advertise it in the papers, as though it were a Museum or a Hippodrome, nor engage a reporter to describe the architecture, the upholstery, the pictures, the statuary, the "princely host," and the "queenly mistress." It seems to us, that people who can resort to such "show tricks," must feel exceedingly out of place in a "palatial dwelling," and that they would be much more at home in a tent or wigwam.

* * *

THE HUMAN MACHINE.

Notwithstanding the innumerable methods of tinkering the human system which modern ingenuity has devised, it wears out and collapses just as it did when the healing art was in its infancy. There have been, it is true, improvements in surgery, but the practice of medicine, as pursued by the majority of the profession, kills as often and cures as seldom as it did a hundred years ago. If we are to believe some of the most distinguished modern practitioners, such men for instance as Brodie, Majendie and Abernethy, the ordinary modes of treating diseases are in many instances not merely useless, but dangerous. Nature, according to the testimony of these celebrated men, is not unfrequently crushed down by the doctors, when, if left to herself, she would throw off the malady and restore the health and strength of the patient. Washington was the victim of medical dogmatism, so was Byron, so still more recently was the eminent Sardinian statesman, Count Cavour. They were all *slaughtered with the lancet*, a weapon more fatal in the hands of some members of the faculty, than a Minié rifle in the hands of a soldier.

* * *

"BREAD AND BUTTER."

If the harvest news from Europe is authentic, American breadstuffs to a large amount will be required to feed its hungry millions. The grain crops of England, France, Germany, Italy and Portugal, are said to be one-third less than the average yield, and unless this serious deficiency is supplied from our superabundance, famine prices will prevail in Great Britian and on the continent during the ensuing winter, and bread riots will disturb the public peace. Fortunately our granaries and corn cribs, heaped with the produce of two unexampled harvests, are sufficient for the wants of the transatlantic world. We are now exporting grain and corn at the rate of a million of dollars' worth per week, and this enormous export can be largely increased without trenching upon the store which should be retained for home consumption. Under these circumstances neither England nor France can afford to treat this country with contumely. To do so would be literally to quarrel with their bread and butter.

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THE LEDGER of next week will be printed on electrotype plates taken from new type, cast expressly for it. When the electrotype system was applied to newspaper "forms" or pages, it was thought that one font of type would last almost forever, as it would be used only to take the electrotypes from, and never be subjected to the wear and tear of printing. But our vast circulation compels us to take so many sets of plates every week, that our type soon becomes worn out simply by that work alone, so that we have to renew it about as often as other papers, which do not resort to electrotyping, have to renew theirs. The success of the LEDGER is so great, however, and its circulation keeps constantly up to such a prodigious figure, that the expense of frequently renewing our type, great as it is in fact, is *comparatively* a trifling affair, and one that we shall never hesitate for one moment to incur, when we think it will be of the slightest benefit to our paper and its myriad readers.

* * *

NEW YORK, Oct. 18th, 1861.

MR. BONNER:—I saw an article in the Tribune the other day signed "Fanny Fern." How is this? Have you not repeatedly stated in the LEDGER that this distinguished authoress writes for no paper but yours?

BULL RUN.

The article you saw in the Tribune signed "Fanny Fern" must have been a forgery, as we have a contract with her to write exclusively for the LEDGER, and we know that she writes for no other paper. For any other person to assume her signature is, to say the least, a piece of most impudent effrontery.

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS AND WALLENSTEIN.

BY JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

Count Wallenstein, Duke of Friedland, enriched by the spoils of war, was dwelling in his palaces at Prague and on the Baltic, luxuriating in sumptuousness which even his emperor, Ferdinand II., was unable to rival. Ferdinand was an inexorable tyrant, striving, with all the energies of his empire, to crush the spirit of religious liberty throughout Europe. The Protestants rallied beneath the banner of Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden. With resistless march Gustavus had penetrated the heart of Germany, the Protestants from all Europe were rushing to his standards, and Ferdinand began even to tremble for his crown. Raising a large army, he appointed his son, the Archduke Charles, a young man of twenty-four years, to the nominal command, requesting Wallenstein to serve as his executive and advising general.

"No," replied the haughty and impious warrior, "no; I would not serve as second in command under God himself."

The renown of Gustavus as a warrior was such that the services of Wallenstein, his only rival in the military art, could not be dispensed with. Immediately upon receiving his appointment, with amazing energy he commenced operations. Allured by his reputation, adventurers from all parts of Europe crowded around him. In three months he had an army of sixty thousand men in a high state of discipline.

Gustavus, on the flood tide of victory, was advancing from the Rhine to the Danube. Wallenstein pressed forward to meet him, saying:

"I will whip him, like a truant schoolboy, back to his country with rods. I will soon settle the question whether Gustavus Adolphus or Wallenstein is to be master of the world."

The Swedish king was at Nuremburg, with but twenty thousand men, when he heard of the approach of his great rival, with forces three times outnumbering his own. Disdaining to retreat, he threw up redoubts and prepared for battle. Wallenstein spread out his lines in front of these entrenchments, but he had so much respect for the military prowess of his foe that he did not venture upon an attack, but faced rampart with rampart. Gustavus did everything in his power to provoke Wallenstein to make the assault, but in vain. Thus the two armies remained for eight weeks, eagerly watching each other, strengthening their entrenchments, and gathering reinforcements, while neither party was willing to make the rush upon the batteries of its antagonist.

At last Gustavus gave orders for the charge. With impetuosity which human strength and courage could hardly surpass, the Swedes sallied from their entrenchments, and, breasting war's most terrific storm, assailed the bristling lines of the foe. The tempest of battle was as brief as it was destructive. The assailants, repulsed at every point, were driven back within their lines, with the loss of three thousand of their best troops.

Another fortnight passed away of apparent inaction, while both parties watched an opportunity to strike a fatal blow. During this singular struggle of patient endurance, famine and sickness wasted both camps. Gustavus, who had been continually calling in reinforcements, buried twenty thousand men beneath his entrenchments; and the hosts of Wallenstein were so thinned that but 30,000 were left to answer to the roll call.

Gustavus at length defiantly retired, followed slowly, and at a safe distance, by Wallenstein. Both commanders energetically accumulated reinforcements, and manœuvered to obtain the choice of a field of battle. They met at Lutzen, about thirty miles from Leipsic. The sun was just sinking behind the wintry hills, on the 16th of November, 1632, when they came within sight of each other's banners. Both armies passed the night in preparing for the battle of the morrow. The morning was dark and lowering, and so dense a fog covered the plain that no object could be seen at the distance of a few rods. About noon the sun dispersed the vapor, and a scene was presented such as few eyes have ever gazed upon.

Gustavus and Wallenstein were indisputably the two ablest captains of the age. Their soldiers were equally disciplined and brave. The plain of Lutzen was spread out for miles as smooth and treeless as an American prairie. A straight, wide road passed through the centre of this plain. On one side of this road, along a line two miles in length, extended the army of Wallenstein, protected by a hastily constructed ditch and redoubts, bristling with bayonets and artillery. The cavalry were at the wings, ponderous batteries at the centre, while solid squares of infantry were drawn up to repel the assailing columns. Forty thousand troops were in this position awaiting the storm of battle.

Gustavus with about 30,000 men was upon the other side of the road, his troops drawn up in a parallel line. He had dispersed, along his double ranks, bands of cavalry, with artillery and columns of infantry, that he might be ready from any point to rush to the assault or to repel an attack. The two armies were hardly at the distance of musket shot from each other.

And now both armies, in prayer, appealed to God for his blessing. The Catholic priests celebrated mass, administered the sacrament to the soldiers, and assured them that all who died in a cause so sacred as that of the papal church, were sure of an immediate admission to Heaven. The Protestant chaplains led the devotions of the hosts of Gustavus. They implored God's aid for their arms, which they had raised in defence of His truth. And then the whole Protestant army reverently, and with heads uncovered, sang the Psalm, which Watts has so finely versified:

> "God is the refuge of his saints,
> When storms of dark distress invade
> Ere we can offer our complaints
> Behold him present with his aid."

From nearly thirty thousand voices this hymn floated in the air, a celestial anthem, to be followed by all the horrid clangor of war. There perhaps never was a battle fought on earth, in which each side did not claim that its cause was just. Even the fallen angels, led by Satan, declared that they were contending only for liberty and their rights. It cannot be doubted that in this religious war there were many, on both sides, who honestly believed that they were in the path of duty, and who sincerely looked to God for his blessing.

A dense column of troops, emerged from the lines of Gustavus, slowly crossed the road and approached the trenches of the foe, while both armies looked on in breathless silence. They were received with a volcanic flame of fire, which covered the sod with mangled corpses. Column after column followed up the assault, while the deadly tempest blazed along the whole lines. Gustavus, in his zeal, threw himself from his horse, seized a pike and placed himself at the head of one of the charging columns. He was entreated not to expose himself so recklessly.

"My hour," he replied, "is written in Heaven, and cannot be reversed."

A sulphurous canopy of smoke soon enveloped the field, beneath which the combatants struggled with all the rage which religious hate and political rancor could engender. As Gustavus was galloping across the field, a bullet shattered his arm. Almost at the same moment another struck his breast, and he fell mortally wounded from his horse, exclaiming, "My God! my God!"

His riderless horse, rushing in terror along the lines, proclaimed the event to the army. But the Duke of Saxe Weimer, to avert the dismay, declared that the king was not killed but taken prisoner. This roused the Swedes to superhuman exertions. Recklessly, in a simultaneous charge, they rushed over the ramparts of their foes, and the whole imperial army was thrown into confusion and commenced a retreat. But just at that moment General Pappenheim, with eight fresh regiments of cavalry, came galloping upon the plain. This restored the battle to Wallenstein, and the Swedes, driven back in disorder, felt that the battle was lost. Such are the chances of war. But another moment again changed the aspect of the field. A well-directed fire upon the advancing cavalry threw them into confusion, and Pappenheim fell, and was crushed beneath the trampling hoofs.

The cry, "Pappenheim is killed," sent a panic along the imperial lines, and the whole host turned and fled. No efforts of Wallenstein could arrest the confusion. A dark and foggy night soon rescued the fugitives from the sabres of the pursuers. In the darkness, by the light of a lamp, the body of Gustavus was found, covered with blood, amidst heaps of the slain, and so mutilated by tramplings of cavalry, that it could with difficulty be recognized. Thus fell Gustavus Adolphus, in the hard-fought field of Lutzen, in the thirty-eighth year of his age. A plain stone, surrounded by a few poplars, still marks the spot where he fell. It is a shrine, visited by pilgrims from all parts of the world, bearing homage to one of the most illustrious of monarchs and of men.

* * *

ON THE FENCE.

A public writer who hampers his thoughts or his pen, with the futile hope of offending nobody, had better take to some line of business where pusillanimity is considered a virtue. I, for one, have not yet learned the hair-splitting art of admiring a man, or a set of men, individually, and asking pardon for the painful necessity of hating them geographically. I don't understand making believe knock a man, or a set of men, down with one hand, while patting them affectionately on the back with the other. In short, "neutrality," which seems to be the word-embodiment of Judas Iscariot-ism, is not in my dictionary. My boundary line has no zigzag in it. I know a sheep from a goat; a lamb from a wolf; and am not afraid to call both by their right names, though I'm not a man. What *is* a man anyhow? For, by the holy prophet, I am nonplussed now-a-days for an answer. It would seem, in some instances, to be a creature who bows and cringes to the basest, and humbly begs pardon for coming into the world at all, unless it come in a coach and six.

Now I was born. That was not my fault. What is worse I was born a woman, which was an aggravation of the insult, only to be computed by a sufferer, and that *not a fellow*-sufferer! But now I *am* here, under such discouraging circumstances, I will, at least, take a woman's privilege, and say what I like. Why not? A woman is not eligible to any office. I can't be president. I can't have a foreign diplomacy. I am not a politician to tread tiptoe over the map of the United (?) States. It stands to reason, then, I needn't be bowing and cringing to the four points of the compass, for fear I shall be laid on the shelf or turned out of office. Thank goodness that, though I'm sunk low enough to be a woman, I'm not "a man," with an India rubber creed and an elastic-spring-knee, to bend to everybody who cracks the whip-lash of interest or policy over my head! There, if this is not a feminine oration, you may live to the age of Methusaleh before you'll hear one more so.

FANNY FERN.

* * *

"THE DEWY MORNING."

There is nothing to our eye more forlorn than the aspect of a city by daylight. If a traveller wishes to get a favorable impression of it, by all means let him enter it at evening, when the thousand glancing lights wink a friendly welcome, and all its inhabitants are astir for relaxation and pleasure. But early morning, with sleepy boys dragging down heavy shutters; with pale women creeping out of bye-ways and alleys for the petty means to prolong another day's miserable existence; with the houseless, and homeless, and ragged, and wretched of all descriptions shrinking away from day's broad glare, while luxury and plenty take their comfortable morning nap on downy pillows; all this is to the traveller most wretchedly dispiriting, particularly if he has been roused to resume his journey before daylight, in the absence of anything to warm his stomach or his imagination. And this reminds me to say, that he who pronounces upon the good nature of any individual, whom he has not seen and talked with *before breakfast*, is an idiot. Anybody can pass muster *then*; but let me address the unhappy wretch who sits, watch in hand, counting the probabilities of postponed coffee and beefsteak! If he take an amiable view of life at *that* trying hour, I pronounce him equal to any vicissitude this side his tomb-stone.

FANNY FERN.

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—The *Courant* relates that a pious swindler obtained board at No. 34 Windsor street, representing himself as a theological student, and after borrowing several articles of jewelry of the ladies, left on Monday without paying his board or returning the jewelry.

The above we copy from the Evening *Press*, of Hartford, because it reminds us of a "pious"—or, as we should say, sanctimonious—individual from the same city who called upon us some time ago, and after congratulating us upon the great success of the LEDGER, and stating how many friends we had in Hartford, and how many admirers the paper had, solicited a donation from us to help along his church. We promptly gave him one hundred dollars. He subsequently wrote a note to us in which he supplicatingly solicited another donation. This time, for sufficient reasons, we did not deem it our duty to give him any more money. Lately, we are informed, this same man has been sneering at the LEDGER, on account of an article that appeared in our columns which he applied to himself. We leave our readers to judge for themselves, on this mere naked statement of the facts in the case, of the character of such conduct on the part of a clergyman. Lest some other minister in Hartford should be blamed, we will state that the man to whom we refer is Rev. T. S. Childs.

— The above paragraph appeared in the LEDGER of August 17th. We understand that Mr. Childs called on a friend of ours—a distinguished clergyman of this city—a few days ago, and complained that we had impeached his character in regard to money matters. Mr. Childs is very much mistaken. We did not intimate that Mr. Childs misappropriated the money that we gave him, nor did we even suspect him of doing such a thing. In fact, if anybody misappropriated it, it was ourselves. As for having any malice towards Mr. Childs, we never wished him half the injury which he has done to himself.

* * *

—To our readers in the upper part of the city who desire the services of an excellent dentist—one who is both careful and skilful—we would recommend Dr. Marcelin, at the corner of Twenty-eighth street and Ninth avenue. We had occasion lately to call upon him ourself, and were very much pleased with the manner in which he discharged his professional duty.

THOUGHTS AS THEY OCCUR.---No. 94.

BY ONE WHO KEEPS HIS EYES AND EARS OPEN.

The progress of disenchantment marks the advance of age and decline. Our youth occupies itself unconsciously in surrounding all things with the hues and proportions of the imagination. Mountains will never again be so large as in childhood, nor roads so long, nor stones so heavy, nor colors so bright, nor distances so limitless. When the ripe man, after years of absence, revisits the scenes of childhood, he is disappointed and surprised. Is it possible that this little stone, which was a landmark in our games, ever seemed so vast as it did?

Is this the *river*—this thread of silver water—from whose edge we used to look fearingly into the current? And those immense trees, in whose tops winter winds roared, and summer birds sang, can it be possible that they were so small as this? Once we thought it a feat to throw a stone up to the middle branches; now, to jerk one over the top is a mere trifle. The well is not so deep as it was. The pasture is not so large, the road to Aunt Bull's not so long, nor to the brook beyond where we watered the horse every day, nor to the orchard, nor to Mr. Bidwell's, nor clear round to the pond!

In like manner do our wonderful books, and wonderful heroes, diminish in interest and importance. Robinson Crusoe and Pilgrim's Progress alone hold out, and are as engaging in later years as in earlier. But, even that incomparable marvel and soul-stirring repository of wonder, the Arabian Nights, have lost their wonderfulness. We read them with sadness to find that we are so little interested where once we were intoxicated with excitement. Meanwhile the witch stories, the children's tales, the Jack the Giant-killer and his compeers, are gone forever.

If we could array before our judgment now, the wits, the skilful men, the strong men, that excited our youthful admiration, it is very probable that we should turn them all off as worth scarcely a thought. It is said that *the strong man* of the town could lift a barrel of cider and drink from the bung. We used to imagine what a time Samson would have had with such another giant! And, it is to be doubted, whether Samson with all his strength ever lifted a barrel of cider and drank out of its bung.

In these degenerate days of railroads, stage-coaches are no longer the important things they were in our childhood. When the horn sounded, far up the street, where the road comes into the village, no matter where we were nor at what play, we ran and tumbled into the front yard to see the wonder of each alternate day. There came the four horses, and the swinging, round-topped stage—and, that great man, the stage-driver!

If *he* had commanded us, we verily believe we should have raced and chased the town over, on his errands, enough compensated by being under the command of a man so wonderful. Not Solomon in all his glory was ever arrayed like one of these, or drove such horses, or had such supreme influence upon the children! And then, to go down to the stage yard, where Parks kept his horses; to walk reverently about the new, red, magnificent stage, to look in at the stable door and see a long row of hind legs, and half as many long tails whisking around them, and to wonder what was outside of the door beyond, and take to our heels with desperate fear when the hostler, in imaginary anger, roared out, "Clear out, you rascals! what are you doing here?"—these experiences weighed on our after thoughts, and formed a part of our boyish conversations, and were of as much relative importance to us then, as now revolutions and battles are.

But there are some things that lose nothing, and gain much. Those yearning thoughts toward the Infinite and the Eternal—those solemn and trembling moods of veneration in the presence of evident manifestations of Divine Power, those heart-lovings toward noble friends who were worthy of all that the soul could give them—these suffer no declension and no diminution. Age deepens veneration and love. Our riper judgment approves the heart's experience, and adds new impressions. Thus, it would seem as if all experiences that are nearly related to the senses and the body wane as we grow old, while those that spring from the soul inherit something of its immortality, and neither fade with years, or fall away, but, like all the nobler faculties of the mind, grow brighter as they advance toward the Gate, at whose threshold all weakness ends, and perfectness begins.

* * *

FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE FAIR.

MR. LEDGER:—Why is it that women are so much more fond of light, frivolous beaux, who are given to dress, gossip and gaiety, than men of sound sense and sterling natures? Do you not consider this trait of female character a great calamity? Does it not entail many misfortunes upon the race? Please give us a "bit of your mind" on these points, and much oblige

MANY READERS.

We do not agree with our correspondent that *all* women, or even a majority of the sex, are such frivolous creatures as he represents them to be. There are many, no doubt, who are captivated by gay attire, and that prefer those who can only talk amiable nonsense, to men of sound sense and sterling natures. In speaking of such, a shrewd old philosopher says, "the passion of a frivolous woman for a man is nothing else than self-love diverted upon another object. She would have the lover a woman in everything but the sex." And Dryden, in one of his finest satires, makes a woman say,

> Our thoughtless sex is caught by outward form,
> And empty noise; *and loves itself in man.*"

In reference to the evil consequences which this frivolity, and the unions that spring from it, bring upon the race, we think our correspondent has *here* touched upon a vital question. Such women usually marry men, who in their own thoughts are as fine creatures as themselves, that serve only to dissipate their fortunes, inflame their follies, and aggravate their indiscretions. The same female levity is no less fatal after marriage than before. It represents to their imaginations the prudent, faithful husband, as an honest, tractable, and domestic animal, and turns their thoughts upon the fine, gay gentleman that laughs, sings, and dresses so much more agreeably. Nor does the evil stop here. The same levity and ignorance which lead astray the hearts of such women in the choice of their lovers and the treatment of their husbands, operate with the same pernicious influence toward their children, who are taught to accomplish themselves in all those sublime frivolities that appear captivating in the eye of the mother. She admires in her son what she loved in her gallant, and by that means contributes all she can to perpetuate herself in a worthless progeny.

* * *

PRISONERS OF WAR.

The prisoners that have fallen into our hands in the course of the war ought not to be permitted to suffer for want of the necessaries of life. Food enough and of the proper quality, sufficient clothing and shelter ought to be secured to all of them, without the precarious aid of private charity. We owe this to ourselves as a member of the family of civilized nations. We do not believe in taking prisoners to fashionable hotels, and letting them eat their way down through a sumptuous bill of fare; but everything needful for health and comfort they ought to have.

THE SONGS.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

I.

Nightingale, singing so sweet, yet so loud
In the silver-edged breast of yon orient cloud,
Till it seems at a tremble with tender delight,
And all Heaven drinks joy at your murmurous flight—
Nightingale, tell us of what you thus sing,
As you leap still aloft on that song-thrilling wing?

"Of Beauty, of Beauty my soul sings alone,
As I soar to the sun-God and pine for his throne!"

II.

O Poet, thus singing so sweet, yet so loud
In the silver-edged breast of Humanity's cloud,
Till it flushes all over with glorious light,
And fled seems, at last, all the heart-folding night—
O Poet, of what do you rapturous sing
As you tremble still higher on ecstasy's wing?

"Of Beauty, of Beauty my soul sings alone,
As I soar to her God and would kneel by his throne;—
For Beauty's the garment of Truth, the divine,
The eternal for which I must evermore pine!' '

* * *

EUDORA;

OR,

THE FALSE PRINCESS.

BY MRS. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE HIDDEN HAND," "THE DOOM OF DEVILLE," "[illegible]E ELMER," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXX.

"The doomed girl is silent,
I watch with her now,
And her pulse beats no quicker,
Nor flushes her brow.

"The small hand that trembled,
When last in my own,
Lies patient and folded
And colder than stone."

Malcolm paced up and down before the prison walls. The sky was "blind with a double dark" of night and clouds. The huge building itself seemed only a blacker shadow in the black scene. But not darker was the night without than the soul within the solitary watcher. Why did he walk there? Not only because he had promised Annella to do so. Not, either, with the faintest hope of saving the martyr-girl who lay within those strong walls awaiting her doom. No; but to be near her in her sorrow, to watch with her as we watch beside the dead. Who can estimate the anguish of that dark vigil? The deep-voiced clock at the top of one of the towers struck each hour in its turn, and each stroke sounded like a knell upon his ear and heart. He wondered if she heard them too, or if Heaven had blessed her with sleep in these last hours. If so, would to Heaven she might never wake to the horrors of the morning.

While these agonizing thoughts were lacerating his bosom, he raised his eyes towards the east wing of the building, in which she lay, and he was startled to see the gratings strongly defined against a bright, ruddy light shining within!

What was the matter that the deadly darkness of this massive structure, which an instant before had seemed but a shapeless mass of shadows piled up against the midnight sky, should now be illumined so ominously? Was she ill? dying? Heaven, in its mercy, grant that she might be!

But while he gazed with suspended breath, the lighted row of gratings suddenly darkened, and belched forth volumes of lurid smoke, pierced by tongues of flame!

The Prison was on Fire!

"Oh, Heaven! she might escape her impending doom, but only in perishing by the most fearful of deaths!—perishing by fire with hundreds of others!

He rushed to the gate, seized the iron handle of the bell that communicated with the door-keeper's room, and rang it loudly.

Another moment, and the great bell of the prison sounded from the tower, rousing by its deep-toned thunder all the sleepers of the neighborhood, while cries of "Fire! fire! fire!" burst in every tone of terror, anguish, and despair from the inmates of the burning building.

Still but another instant, and crowds of half-dressed men and even women, who seemed to have started up from the depths of the earth in the darkness of the night, came pouring towards the building. The great gates were opened—when, how, or by whom Malcolm scarcely knew. Bewildered by his trouble, he was carried with the crowd and hurried on until he found himself in the great hall of the prison.

Within as without, the most fearful panic prevailed. Warders, turnkeys, and door-keepers, roused from deep sleep by the horrid alarm of fire, hurried hither and thither like men bereft of their senses.

In the ward where Eudora's cell was situated the darkness was intense and the smoke suffocating. Malcolm, who had hastened thither, could scarcely breathe the air. While blindly making his way towards her door, from which he heard the voice of the wardress shrieking "Fire!" and "Help!" he *felt* rather than saw two figures meet in the darkness.

"Is that you, Nally?" demanded the voice of the first, which Malcolm recognized as that of the governor.

"Yes, sir," replied a husky, smoke-smothered voice.

"Take this key, then, and release the condemned prisoner. Slip these handcuffs upon her, and hurry her forward to the west-wing strong-room. Don't let her escape in this confusion. I must go and look after the poor wretches above," said the governor, in an agitated voice, as he hurried away to the other end of the lobby.

Malcolm groped along, keeping as near as he could to the figure that he still *felt* rather than saw moving before him. Screams of "Fire" and "Help" still came from the condemned cell, which now, like the lobby, was as dark as pitch. Malcolm came up with the other just at the cell door. He held his breath with suspense, but the invisible figure beside him breathed quickly and fiercely as they stood there together.

A panic of astonishment transfixed Malcolm as he felt that hot breath upon his cheek. An instant, and the cell door was unlocked and thrown open, and Mrs. Barton, distracted with fright, rushed out past them, to make good her escape from the burning building. Another instant and the mysterious figure, who had plunged into the darkness of the cell, issued forth, and dropped a light, soft burden upon Malcolm's breast, whispering fiercely:

"She is saved! Fly for your life and hers; look not behind you!"

Oh, Heaven! it was Annella's voice! And she had kept her word!

But he felt that there was not an instant to lose. Pressing the light form of the girl close in his arm, he ran along through the darkness and the suffocating smoke, through the lobby, and down the stairs, and out into the free air. The smoke, the darkness, the crowd, and the panic befriended him. He passed the bounds of the prison unobserved, and hurried on towards the thicket where his horse was tied. As he pressed through the dark crowd without, he heard many remarks.

"The fire broke out in the prison wardrobe-room, where they keep the clothing and bedding," said one.

"No one knows how it broke out," said another.

"They have saved all the prisoners, poor wretches!" exclaimed a woman.

"They'll soon bring the fire under, too," observed a man.

No one noticed Malcolm hurrying along with his beloved burden enveloped in a dark shawl. All eyes were fixed on the ignited building, upon the walls of which the fire-engines, which had now arrived, were playing freely.

Malcolm reached the thicket in safety. He sat down for a moment to rest Eudora and uncovered her face to give her air. He thought that she had swooned, but this was not so. She was pale, and weak, and limber, but breathing and conscious. She was the first to speak. Raising her eyes to his, she asked:

"What is all this? What has occurred?"

"You are saved, dearest Eudora!"

"How?"

"I scarcely know myself. Ask no questions yet, dear one, but rally all your strength to fly with me."

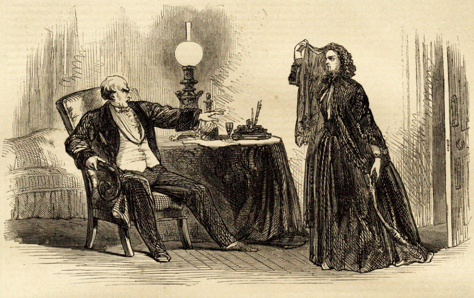
He placed her gently on a bank, where she could rest against the trunk of a tree. He led his horse to the spot, stooped and raised her to the seat before him, and rode slowly and carefully until he was out of the wood. Then putting spurs to his horse, he galloped swiftly towards the sea-coast. As his horse rushed onward Malcolm turned to look at the fire, and was gratified to see that the flames were certainly in process of extinction. With a lighter heart he galloped along the beach until at length he reached the cove, where his hired vessel lay at anchor.

Day was now dawning, and by its faint light they discerned the little boat upon the sands, and the vessel standing off a short distance from the shore.

Malcolm, leaving the horse to his fate, placed Eudora in the boat, pushed it off, took up the pair of oars, and rowed rapidly to the vessel.

The captain was on deck, ready to receive his passengers, whom he had been led to believe were only a pair of "true lovers" running away to be married.

"Poor young lady, but she is dreadfully faint," he said, as he received Eudora from Malcolm's arms, and bore her into the cabin, where he laid her gently upon the berths.



THE MYSTERY EXPLAINED.

"She is; but rest and safety will restore her. When can you sail?"

"This instant! the tide has turned."

"Up Anchor!" shouted the captain, hurrying upon deck.

The anchor was raised, the canvas was unfurled to the breeze, and the little vessel sailed away upon the blue sea.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"For the soul of a sinner
Let masses be said;
The sin shall be nameless,
And nameless the maid."

Long and fearful was the watch kept by poor Tabitha Tabs, who had stationed herself at the back gate of the lawn to await Annella's return. As hour after hour passed away she grew more and more anxious. Where could the strange girl be? When would she come back? Would she ever come back? If not, what would be the consequences? Tabitha shuddered even to conjecture.

At length, when she had grown almost hysterical with suspense, anxiety, and terror, she was startled by seeing a light rising in the distance. It was the burning prison! It was too far off for her to hear the cries of "Fire," or even the alarm-bells, so she could not know what building was in flames; but the fascination of the fire, lighting up the midnight sky, kept her gazing open-eyed and open-mouthed, and forgetful of all her causes of anxiety. She would even have called up her fellow-servants to share the delight of this spectacle, but that she feared they would question how she came to be up and watching, and might thus discover the absence of Annella, who might even return while they were all enjoying the pageantry of this illuminated midnight sky.

While she still gazed upon the scene, with these thoughts revolving through her mind, there was a sharp rap at the gate, followed by the voice of Annella wildly demanding admittance.

"Lord sake, Miss Annella, I am glad you have come at last! I never spent such an anxious night in all my life. Wherever have you been? And you shall never go out in this way again with *my* connivance! And can you tell me what house that is a-fire?" inquired Tabitha, as she unbolted the gate, and put out her hand to draw in the returning fugitive.

But the hand she took was burning hot, and the words that replied to her were wild and incoherent.

Tabitha could not see the face of Annella, but she was greatly alarmed, and holding the hand of the excited girl, she hurried her on to the house, up the back stairs, and into her chamber. There she struck a light and looked at Annella's face. That face was fearful to behold. The cheeks were burning with fever; the eyes were blazing with frenzy.

"Good Lord! the girl is delirious!" cried Tabitha, in affright.

But, panic-stricken as she was, she had the presence of mind to undress Annella and place her in the bed, and put away all her clothing, and set the room in order before she gave the alarm. Then, indeed, she aroused the housekeeper, telling her that Miss Wilder was extremely ill and raving mad, and that a physician should be summoned at once.

Barbara Broadsides felt herself quite equal to such an emergency, and therefore declined to wake up her old mistresses before their accustomed hour. But she aroused Mr. Jessup, and dispatched him to Abbeytown to fetch a doctor, who arrived about the dawn of day. He pronounced the illness of Annella to be a most alarming type of brain-fever, and applied the proper remedies.

This was the beginning of a long and dangerous illness, during which the delirious girl continually raved of fire and floods, perils and rescues; but as no one but Tabitha in that house knew the secret of her absence that night, her talk was all considered to be the mere wanderings of a mind excited and deranged by fever, as, perhaps, it might have been.

CHAPTER XXXII.

"Storm that, like a demon,
Howls with horrid note
Round the toiling seamen
In the tossing boat—
Drive her out to sea!

"Sleet, and hail, and thunder—
And ye winds that rave
Till the sands thereunder
Tinge the sullen wave—
Drive her out to sea!"

The little vessel sailed onward over the blue sea. She was bound for a small and distant port on the coast of France, but she made slow way against a wind almost dead a-head.

Leaving Eudora sleeping in the cabin-berth, Malcolm went on deck to get a little fresh air. While standing in the forward part of the vessel, he observed a man with his back turned and his head bowed upon his breast, in an attitude of deep dejection, leaning against the mast. Something in the general form and air of this man seemed half familiar and half alarming to Montrose. Unable to analyze his instincts in regard to this stranger, he beckoned the captain to approach, and inquired, in a tone of displeasure:

"Who is that man? How is it that you have taken another passenger, when I bargained for the sole use of the vessel?"

"Why, sir, he is not a passenger, but a hand I picked up at Abbeyport, to replace one of my men who is too ill for this trip," answered the captain.

"What is his name?"

"Antony More."

"Antony More!" repeated Malcolm to himself, as he walked up to the stranger, and confronted—Antonio Morio, the *soi-disant* seneschal of the Princess Pezzilini!

"Self-preservation is the first law of nature. What have you to say why I should not forthwith pitch you into the sea, Signor Antonio?" inquired Malcolm, sternly.

"This, Mr. Montrose!—that, so help me Heaven, I will not betray you, nor that sweet young lady in the cabin," answered the man, not in broken English, but in such good vernacular that it might have been his mother tongue.

"Why are you here?"

"That is my secret. Torture should not wring it from me. Pitch me into the sea if you like, Mr. Montrose! I'd quite as lief you would! I shall say no more."

Full of thought, Malcolm walked away from this man, whom he observed was as pale as death, and looked as if recently recovered from some nearly fatal illness.

"The wind is rising," said the captain; "I fear we shall have a gale."

Malcolm hoped not, and went below to carry such refreshments as the vessel afforded to Eudora. After she had partaken of them, she expressed a wish to go up on deck, and Malcolm assisted her to ascend.

"Oh, dear friend! if you could conceive the rapture of moving in wide space, breathing free air, and looking upon the boundless sea and sky once more!" exclaimed Eudora, sinking upon the couch of rugs and cushions that Malcolm had prepared for her upon the deck.

He sat down at her feet, and began to tell her of their destination, and that immediately upon their arrival it would be necessary for them to be united in marriage, and that then they would sail for America, and commence life together.

Eudora listened with calm delight.

But while they talked the wind was rising rapidly and lashing the waves into fury. The little vessel began to roll so heavily that Eudora was driven below for safety. Malcolm guided her down into the cabin.

The wind was now so high that they were compelled to take in the sails, and the voice of the captain was heard shouting at the head of the cabin stairs:

"For God's sake, Mr. Montrose, come up and help us, or we are lost."

Malcolm secured Eudora as well as he could, and hurried up on deck to render assistance.

The storm came on apace. The sky was now as dark as night. The froth-capped waves rushed like foaming steeds before the lashing of the wind.

The little vessel, driven back on her course, was forced to tack and scud under bare poles before the gale, and towards the coast from whence she had sailed but a few hours ago. All the afternoon the little craft, struggling bravely for her life, was driven furiously before the winds and waves.

As evening deepened, the sky darkened to a blacker hue, and the gale increased in violence. The captain and his mate never left the deck for an instant. Malcolm gave all the aid he could, but went below occasionally to reassure Eudora.

"I am not afraid, dear Malcolm. How could any one, who has passed through what I have, be afraid of anything else that could happen in this world? Go on deck and help to save the vessel, and think no more of me," was her constant answer.

Ah! she did not know that they were being driven swiftly back upon the coast of England, to which they were already fearfully near.

The night was now dark as the grave. Not a ray of light was to be seen, except the phosphorescent sparkling of the leaping waves. On—on—the little vessel plunged through the black fury of the tempest. The men had lost all control over her, and merely waited for death, while she was whirled, tossing and pitching, now whelming in the black waves, now lifted towards the sky, and ever carried onward towards the lee shore. While fate was thus imminent, Malcolm had brought Eudora from the cabin, and bound her firmly to himself, so as to leave his limbs free for struggling with the waves. And thus they awaited their doom. At length it came. The vessel was slowly lifted on a mighty wave, and dashed with a stupendous shock upon the sands; and in the same instant all were struggling for life in the black and furious waves.

Malcolm was a strong swimmer; but he never could explain, because he never knew, how he and his companion reached the shore that terrible night.

He only knew that, while the black chaos still roared around him, he found himself high on the beach, stunned and exhausted, with the dripping and drowned form of Eudora in his arms.

Fishermen from the cliffs above were hurrying down with lanterns to render assistance to the shipwrecked mariners.

Two of these came towards him, and with homely words of sympathy, took charge of him and his drowned Eudora, and bore them off to a cottage on the cliff.

"She is dead! quite dead!" moaned Malcolm, in a voice of despair that sounded like content, as he gazed upon the cold, still form that the fisherman's wife had laid upon the rude cottage bed.

"Not she, sir; we'll bring her to presently, if you'll go in t'other room and leave her to us," said the kind dame.

Malcolm turned into the kitchen, where the fisherman supplied him with a suit of dry clothes and a glass of brandy that had never lost its flavor by passing through the custom-house.

And then, while Malcolm sat before the kitchen fire, waiting anxiously to hear some report of Eudora's state, the fisherman relighted his lantern and went out to see what further aid he could render to the sufferers. After an absence of half an hour he returned, and seating himself beside his guest, inquired:

"How many on you might ha' been aboard that craft, master?"

Malcolm informed him.

"Well, then, they're all landed alive."

"Thank God!"

"Aye; but whether they are all saved, that is another matter, master. Some on 'em are badly hurt; and one on 'em mos' particular badly hurt, poor fellow! nigh upon killed, I should think. He's lying in the next cottage."

Malcolm uttered some few words of sympathy, but his whole heart was with Eudora. He could think of no one else. At length the fisherman's wife appeared to relieve his anxiety. "The young lady had come round," she said, "and had inquired after the gentleman, and being told that he was safe and well, she had taken a quieting drink and gone to sleep. And now could the gentleman do better than to follow her example? There was a good bed in the room up stairs that was heartily at his honor's service."

Malcolm thanked the woman, and followed the man, who led him up stairs, to a humble attic, where he stretched himself upon a hard bed. But notwithstanding the weariness and exhaustion of his body, the excitement and anxiety of his mind kept him from sleep until near morning, when he was aroused by a loud knocking at his door. It was the fisherman, who entered, deprecatingly saying:

"Excuse *me*, master, but *might* your name be Mr. Montrose?"

"Yes; what is the matter?" demanded the young man, in a voice so startled as to seem angry, for he dreaded some evil to Eudora.

"Why, then, master, the poor man as were so badly hurt last night, which we think he is dying, is very particular anxious to see you, sir."

"Which of them is he? What is his name?"

"Antony More, sir."

"Antonio Morio!" exclaimed Malcolm, springing from the bed, and quickly preparing to visit the dying man, whom ten minutes after he found lying upon a poor cot in the next hut.

"What can I do for you?" inquired Malcolm, seating himself beside the man.

"First send all these people from the room, as our interview must be a private one," answered Morio, or More, as we shall hereafter call him.

Malcolm made a sign to the fisherman's family, who withdrew from sight only to plant themselves at convenient listening-posts without.

"They say the poor young lady is saved from the wreck. Is it true?"

"Yes."

"I'm glad to be sure about it; for if she had escaped to France, or if she had perished in the waves, I should have died and made no sign. I should have been faithful to the friend who has ruined me, even though she would have consummated that ruin in death, and offered me up the last of the holocaust of victims sacrificed to her evil passions. But now that that poor girl is thrown again upon these shores, to suffer for another's crimes, and that I am dying, I dare not carry to the grave the secret that might save her; or face my Judge with her innocent blood on my soul!"

Malcolm bent over the dying man, and listened with suspended breath, fearing to ask a question or to make an observation, lest he should arrest the confession that was trembling on his lips.

"The theologians are all wrong in supposing the great principal of evil to be a male—it is a female. Satan is a woman—I am sure of it, and many another man must know it also. An evil woman gains a spell over a man's senses, and then a power over his soul, that is like diabolical magic. The man may know her, scorn her, hate her, but he cannot escape from her. Sometimes he goes mad and kills her, and gets himself hanged for it, and finds freedom, purchased even at that price, an infinite relief. Such an ascendancy one fatal woman gained over me. For years I have been her dupe, her slave, her tool. She has been my god, for at her command I have broken all the laws of the Divine One—all all! At her command I would have

"'Marched to death as to a festival!'"

The man paused from exhaustion; but after a few moments of silence, continued:

"Why she wished to destroy the house of Leaton I do not know, but I became her blind tool in that work of destruction——"

"Name this woman!" exclaimed Malcolm, under his breath.

"I cannot; I know neither her name nor her country. She bears half a dozen aliases, and speaks with equal facility half a dozen modern languages——"

"You mean the Italian Princess Pezzilini?"

"I mean the mysterious woman who has successfully imposed herself upon a few guileless country families as that illustrious lady. I first met her many years ago at Rome, where I was in the suite of the English Ambassador, and she in the household of the Princess Gentillescha Pezzilini. When the Palazza Pezzilini was burned by the mob, she purloined the family jewels and papers, and fled with me to Paris, where, with the aid of her documents, she succeeded in passing herself upon Lord Leaton's retired circle as the illustrious lady who had really perished in the burning palace. She accompanied them to England, bringing me in her train. You know what followed. Why she wished to exterminate the whole race of her benefactors from the face of the earth I never knew. She used me without trusting me, or confided in me only so far as was absolutely needful. And when she had no farther use for me, she turned her death-dealing powers against me to get me out of the way. Death was dealt to me insidiously, slowly and cautiously; but still I knew that it *was* death, and that it came from her hand. Even then I was too much under her spell to denounce her; but I escaped from her, and fled for my life when I embarked in the vessel. Judge how glad I was that the poor innocent girl was escaping too!"

"But to do that young lady justice, you are aware that this confession must be made on oath before a magistrate, in the presence of witnesses, with every circumstantial detail, and reduced to writing."

"I know that, and have already sent to summon the proper persons," moaned the man, who now seemed thoroughly exhausted.

Malcolm gave him drink. And in a few minutes afterwards a justice of the peace, attended by his clerk, arrived at the hut. A magistrate in a populous district is inured to startling revelations. Therefore this worthy justice sat calmly through the terrible statement made upon oath by the dying man, and reduced to writing by the clerk. The document was signed by Antony More, and witnessed by Malcolm Montrose and another.

The necessary warrants were then issued, and the magistrate departed, leaving a constable in charge of the dying witness, whom the doctor pronounced unfit for removal.

Malcolm Montrose hurried to the cottage where Eudora lay concealed, to comfort her with news of the revelation that would completely vindicate her fair fame.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"And well my folly's meed you gave,
Who forfeited to be your slave,
All here and all beyond the grave!
You saw another's face more fair,
You knew her of broad lands the heir,
Forgot your vows, your faith forswore,
And I was then beloved no more."

The whole conversation at Abbeytown turned upon the subject of the accident at the prison. It was well ascertained that the fire had originated in the clothes-room. But the flames had been extinguished before any very material damage was done to the building. No one was injured, and no one was missing, except Eudora Leaton, who was supposed to have perished in the flames or to have escaped in the confusion.

Annella Wilder, on her fevered bed, raved of conflagrations and tempests, and deadly perils by fire or flood. And the two old ladies scolded all the women for mentioning the burning prison in her presence.

"For how could she have known anything about it but for their gabbling in her sick room?" inquired Mrs. Stilton.

The admiral was divided between anxiety for the recovery of his grand-daughter and aspiration for the love of the Princess Pezzilini! Yes, despite his own bitter matrimonial reminiscences, his threescore years, and the constant supervision of the two sibyls, "that boy" had become the bond-slave of the Italian princess. In addition to the beauty, accomplishments, and fascination of the woman, there were other strong reasons for this infatuation. The admiral, like most self-made men, had a profound veneration for hereditary greatness. And her assumed title of "princess," even though it only represented the ill-defined rank of an *Italian* princess, threw a halo over the Pezzilini that enhanced her value a hundredfold.

Then the admiral was of an heroic temper, and her perilous adventures charmed his mind. He was also excessively benevolent, and her misfortunes melted his heart.

Thus it happened that the admiral was kneeling at the feet of the "princess," in the recess of the bay window, when the officers arrived with the warrant for her "highness's" arrest.

The "princess" was calmly incredulous; the household were astonished; the admiral was furious! It was a mistake, an absurdity, an outrage; but the persecuted princess was in England, the land of civil and religious liberty, thank Heaven! and should have justice done her, so he said.

He ordered out his own carriage to take her before the magistrate, and insisted on escorting her. The officers made no objection to these arrangements, stipulating only that they should occupy the remaining two seats in the carriage, so as to keep their charge in view. In this manner the *soi-distant* princess was taken to the town-hall, where the magistrates were then sitting. The examination occupied a very long time, yet the case was so clearly made out against the adventuress that she was fully committed for trial. And the same day a report of the proceedings was dispatched to the Home Secretary, with a petition in behalf of Eudora Leaton, falsely convicted of poisoning her uncle's family, and reported missing since the fire. This was met by a respite of the sentence until after the trial of Madame Pezzilini should either confirm or refute the testimony upon which the latter had been indicted.

The assizes were still in session, and the trial was fixed for an early day.

Antony More, to the surprise of every one, survived his great injuries, and was able to appear in the court as a witness against her. His testimony was clear, conclusive, and corroborated by certain facts produced in evidence. The trial occupied three days, at the end of which the self-styled princess was convicted and sentenced. She received her doom with the cool self-possession she had displayed throughout the whole proceedings. Only once she betrayed a momentary emotion. Throughout her short imprisonment she had been frequently visited by an elderly woman, whose relations to her were unknown. Soon after being placed in the condemned cell, she was visited by this woman, upon whose bosom she threw herself in a transient burst of feeling.

"Do nothing rash, my mother—my most injured mother. Keep your own counsel, for I will never betray you!"

The next instant she was as calm and self-possessed as ever, but the wardress had overheard her words.

When the visitor had departed, the prisoner was carefully searched by the women, but no instrument of self-destruction was found upon her, and she was permitted at last to lie down and rest, guarded by the wardress.

On the night succeeding the conviction of the strange adventuress, the Lord Chief Baron Elverton was seated alone in his apartment at the Leaton Arms, pondering over the subject of the most inexplicable criminal trial at which he had ever presided; for though the guilt of the accused had been established to the satisfaction of the jury, yet her motive for the deed was still a deep mystery.

Jealousy, revenge, avarice, ambition, the usual incentive to such crimes, seemed totally wanting in this case, and why she had exterminated her benefactor's family was still a secret.

While the baron pondered over this subject, the door was opened and a visitor announced.

It was a woman of majestic appearance, clothed in deep mourning, and closely vailed.

She advanced to the table, at which he was seated, and threw aside her vail. And oh, what a countenance was there revealed!

It was a fine face, still bearing the vestiges of magnificent beauty, but it was the thunder-blasted beauty of the ruined archangel!

"Again!" cried the baron, with a shudder of horror, as he met her dark, splendid eyes, now blazing with the fires of insanity.

"Ay, again! for the third and last time since your sin, I stand before you, Baron Elverton!" replied the stranger.

"In the name of Heaven, what is your will with me?"

"To sum up—*just judge!*"

"I know not what you mean beyond this, that it must be some new diabolism!"

"Do you know whom you have condemned to death to-day?"

"No, beyond the fact that she was an adventuress with a half dozen aliases, a murderess, who merited breaking upon the wheel rather than any milder form of death!"

"Ah, she was very wicked, was she not?"

"A double-dyed, diabolical traitor to destroy her benefactors, and without even any apparent motive for the deed!"

"But perhaps she could not help it. Treachery and ingratitude were hereditary with her, were in her blood, were given to her at her birth."

"What dark meaning now lurks under your words?"

"Listen, Baron Elverton, while I tell you. More years ago than I care to count, the sinful woman who confronts you now for the last time was a sinless child—the only child of a poor old widowed country curate. She became, at seventeen years of age, the nursery governess of your little sisters. You saw and admired her beauty. You made her your wife by a secret marriage."

"Woman! why do you recall these follies after all these years?"

"To lead to the end! You made Harriette Newton your wife by a clandestine marriage, but you were a few months under age, and the marriage was not binding unless you should choose to make it so after your majority. Alas! before that time arrived you had repented of your 'low' marriage, and grown tired of the humble woman whose peace you had destroyed. When your secret was discovered you humbled yourself to your offended father; you promised never to see the 'girl' again; you suffered her to be sent back with ignominy to break the heart of *her* father, for the poor old curate never held up his head again; he died before his daughter became a mother——"

"Harriette, I was a boy then——"

"A boy with the hardened heart of a veteran sinner! Your father died; you came into your estates; and I, with my daughter in my arms, threw myself at your feet, and entreated you to acknowledge us as your wife and child——"

"And then I would have done it, Harriette."

"Aye, for a moment nature made herself heard above the clamor of pride, ambition, selfishness! You would have yielded, you would then and there have restored us to our places in your heart and home, but you were prevented!"

"Aye, I was prevented!"

"And who was it that hindered you in that act of justice? Your bosom friend and confidant, *Henry Lord Leaton!* He it was who, in that moment of your better feelings, laid his hand upon your shoulder, and bade you pause and reflect; told you that marriage with an inferior was always a snare and a curse to both parties; that I was unfitted for the sphere of life to which you would have raised me; that by such a marriage you would be humiliated and wretched, and I misplaced and miserable; bade you remember the fate of the 'Ladye of Burleigh,' and take warning, and advised you to repudiate and provide for us! 'Provide for us!' I think even *he* saw that I would have seen my child slowly starve to death in my arms rather than have taken one crumb from the father who refused to acknowledge her as his legitimate daughter!" exclaimed the woman, with her eyes suddenly kindling.

"He was a high-toned, honorable man; he meant well by you and me."

"Especially by me and my child, whom he consigned to a life of misery, dishonor and reproach!" said the woman, in withering scorn. "Enough! by his advice and his assistance, you succeeded in annulling your juvenile marriage and repudiating your wife and child! Once more we were turned from your door. I had a long illness, during which, I think, my soul must have left my body, and the spirit of a fiend entered it. For, a loving, suffering, forgiving woman, I fell into that fever, but I arose from it the avenger of my own sex, the destroyer of yours!"

He knew that her words were the ravings of insanity, and yet they seemed to curdle his blood.

She continued:

"Were there not fallen angels enough in this pandemonium of a world that you might have spared the poor old curate's little daughter? What excuse had you for her destruction? Love? Bah! Love does not destroy its object! Passion? Passion is of the soul, and your soul was smothered in selfishness even in your infancy! *You* feel a single glow of human love or passion, who from boyhood have been a monster of egotism! But I did not come here to deal in invective—I came to wind up accounts with you for ever. Enough that I arose from that bed of illness a spirit prepared for any work of evil! Every door was closed against me—every road barred except that which leads down to death and perdition! I do not intend to amuse you, baron, with the life of a lost spirit. I was not far from you on that grand day when you led the Lady Elfrida Gaunt to the altar; and my curse that arose to Heaven interrupted the marriage benediction. I was near you also on that other proud day, when bonfires blazed and bells were rung, and oxen roasted in honor of the christening of your heir, and my curse neutralized the blessing of the babe. Then I pressed my own discarded child to my heart, and recorded a vow of vengeance upon two men and all their race, even though it should take me a long lifetime to work it out. How long I pursued you secretly, how often I failed, need not here be told. One day I found myself in Paris, among congenial spirits, where a career opened before me; where evil is organized into a perfect working system, having its constitution and by-laws—its forms of government and schools of training—its lovely girls and handsome boys, educated into accomplished women and men to become the sirens and satyrs of society. Of this secret band I became a member. Men called me beautiful and gifted. I went upon the stage, not from necessity, but to facilitate my intercourse with a certain set of wealthy dupes, for I still continued a bond member of the secret society. Years passed, and I became a celebrity. At last I met the aged and decrepit General de la Comte. He offered me marriage, and I accepted him. He had a daughter but a few months younger than my own. He died in the second year of our marriage, leaving me to bring up the two girls. When these young women had reached a marriageable age, your son, grown to manhood, appeared in Paris——"

Here the woman paused, and looked wistfully into the blanched face of the old man; then, with a dreadful smile, she said:

"But you know the story——"

"Woman of Belial, yes!"

"But you do not know whom you have doomed to death to-day."

"Ha! There is something more than meets the ear in this reiterated question! Whom do you mean?"

"Your own daughter! She who, but for your black treachery, would now be ruling in your halls, heiress of Elverton, instead of lying in a prison-cell, a convicted felon!"

"Great Heaven! this is most horrible! But then—but then—if this story is true, the communication that you made to my unhappy son, upon that fatal night which drove him in madness from his home, a fugitive and a wanderer over the face of the earth, and turned the fair home into a Gehenna of remorse and despair was false—*must* have been utterly false!" exclaimed the baron, in uncontrollable agitation between the horror he felt at being told that the criminal he had just condemned to death was his own discarded daughter, and the joy that rushed upon him with the thought that another and a deeper curse was removed from his house.

His condition between these two excessive and antagonistic emotions bordered upon insanity.

"Ah!" muttered the woman to herself, with an expression of perplexity and pain traversing her fine features as she passed her hand over her brow; "I did not mean to betray that fact; but my brain! my brain; I am not well!"

"Harriette!" exclaimed the baron, excited beyond all measure, as he arose and dropped his hand upon her shoulder, "Harriette, as you hope for God's pardon in your dying hour——"

"I do *not* hope for His pardon!" interrupted the woman, gloomily.

"TELL ME, who is she that lies doomed to death in yonder cell?" demanded the baron, without noticing her interruption.

"I have told you! your daughter and mine! the rightful heiress of Elverton, if justice had been done!"

"And she whom my son married——"

"I have unwillingly betrayed that secret too! take it, since you have it! Your son's wife is the daughter of the late General de la Compte, by his first wife, and was, therefore, *not* within the prohibited degree of kindred according to the marriage code. Our daughter never married; she was destined to another doom; to work her mother's will; to avenge her mother's wrongs. For this I kept her always near me; won her whole heart; absorbed her will; mastered her spirit. Whatever she has done in this world has been done for me, and often blindly by her. She had but one human affection—filial love. To-day the daughter stood before the father's face to receive from him the doom of death. But the doom was unmerited."

"Woman! what do you tell me?"

"She was guiltless of the death of the Leatons!"

"Who, then, was the destroyer?"

"*I!*" shouted the monomaniac. "I, THE AVENGER! I, who, in the same hour that I turned away from your triumphant wickedness, with my discarded child pressed to my bleeding heart—I who, in the same hour that transformed me from a woman to a fiend, vowed a vow of exterminating wrath against two men, with all their race, and sold my soul to Satan for the power of accomplishing the work! Had not Satan failed me at the last, the race of Leaton would have been extinguished in blood and shame. That of Elverton would have lived in misery and dishonor—worse than death and perdition."

"Woman, you wildly rave! Come to your senses—collect yourself, explain; you say that your daughter was guiltless; that *you* were the criminal; if this is not a mere trick to attempt to defeat the ends of justice, how do you explain away the direct evidence of Antony More, who swore that he was employed by the so-called Princess Pezzilini to procure the drugs of which the Leatons died!" inquired Lord Elverton, who, amidst all the violent emotion that shook the bosom of the man retained the mental calmness of the judge.

"Antony More was a fool and a beast; the slave of a slave; the mere tool of her who was but the tool of her mother. I put into the hands of my daughter a card with the name of the drug I wanted written upon it. I said to her, 'Give this card to your dog, Antonio, and tell him to procure the drug secretly and bring it to you; when you get it, pass it secretly to me.' This was done. Afterwards, she privately admitted me to the house on various occasions by night; and so the work was accomplished; and the last Leaton would have perished on the scaffold for the murder of the others, but that Satan failed me at the very last! It was necessary to get rid of Antony More; but I was not quick enough about it. He took the alarm and fled, and you know the result—a shipwreck, a confession, and the arrest, trial, and conviction of Agnes. But Agnes is guiltless! guiltless even of purloining the jewels and documents of the Princess Gentileschа Pezzilini, which were really given into my hands for safe custody during the time of trouble; and only after the burning of the palace and the death of the princess were they used by me for the furtherance of our plans. For the rest, whatever Agnes might have suspected, she never certainly knew why I wanted the *Fabæ Sancta Ignatii*, or for what purpose I kept myself concealed in the neighborhood and gained admittance to the abbey only in the dead of night. That dolt, Antony More, complained that she never took him into her confidence! How could she, when she had nothing to confide to him? But she is guiltless, and must not perish! She was the only human creature that was ever true to me; but she must not die for me! Baron Elverton, I came here to denounce myself as the destroyer of the Leaton family! You know your duty; do it!"

"Yes," he said, "whether you are mad or sane, it is equally necessary that you should be placed in custody. And to-morrow this affair shall be investigated. If your unfortunate daughter should be proved really guiltless, justice must be done her at any cost to myself or to you! And you, wretched woman! must take your chance between the doom of death and the living grave of Bedlam!" said the baron, as he rang the bell and summoned the proper officers.

And ten minutes afterwards the woman was in custody of the police.

Early the next morning inquiries were set on foot. They were too late to avail the unhappy, blind instrument of a mother's vengeance. The *soi-disant* Princess Pezzilini was found dead in her bed. A small locket ring, that fitted tightly upon her finger, was open; but instead of some minute likeness of a friend's face, or small lock of a lover's hair, it contained only a tiny glass cavity, which being subjected to scientific experiments, was supposed to have contained a certain deadly poison, one drop of which was sufficient to have produced instantaneous dissolution.

Yes, "like the scorpion girt with fire," she had stung herself to death!

In due time the criminals were brought to justice and paid the penalty of their crimes.

When the turbulent emotions excited by these later events had somewhat subsided, Malcolm Montrose and Eudora Leaton were quietly married at the villiage church.

Annella Wilder, who had recovered from her severe illness, attended as bridemaid. Norham Montrose officiated as best man. Admiral Sir Ira Brunton gave the bride away.

After the ceremony they set out immediately for Southampton, whence they sailed for India, where Montrose had received a high official appointment, and where, for the further restoration of Eudora's peace of mind, he had determined to fix their future residence.

Up to the hour of their departure one trouble had weighed upon the mind of Malcolm. That grief remained unspoken, yet found its most eloquent expression in the earnest gaze he sent into Annella's eyes as he pressed her hand in a last adieu. She understood, and replied to his look by saying:

"I know what it is that you would say if you dared! but you are widely mistaken. *I did not set fire to the prison!* Not even to have saved Eudora's precious life would I have endangered hundreds of other lives. No, desperate as my plan of rescue was, it was not so criminal as that! What the nature of my original project was it is needless now to say, since it was forestalled by accident. It is enough for me to admit that I had concealed myself in the building that night for the purpose of carrying out my plan of rescue when the alarm of fire startled me as well as others. My first thought was of Eudora and her safety, and I was rushing through the black and suffocating lobby, in which her cell was situated, when I was met by the governor, who, in the double darkness of night and thick smoke, mistook me for the only person who had any business there—Nally, the old turnkey of that ward. Thus I got possession of the key of the cell, and was enabled to keep my word with you. I did it without crime. Take that comfort to India with you."

"God bless you, Annella!" exclaimed Malcolm, drawing a deep inspiration with a sense of infinite relief, as he pressed her hand and bade her farewell.

The long-severed pair of Edenlawn — long severed through the cruellest misrepresentation —were at length re-united. The world, who knew neither the cause of their severance nor of their re-union, ascribed both to caprice; but the contented family at Edenlawn cared little for its misapprehension.

Strong suspicion of foul play on the part of the unfortunate and guilty Madame de la Compte had brought Hollis Elverton again to England, but her cunning had baffled his unaided attempts at investigation, while the very nature of his wrongs prevented him from calling in the aid of the detective police, and thus accident alone brought the guilty to justice.

With the full approbation of their mutual friends, Norham Montrose and Alma Elverton were married, and, at the desire of all parties, fixed their abode at Edenlawn, where Alma's "hunger of the heart" is at length fully satisfied, for in her the circle of human love is complete. She lives in the rich enjoyment of father's, mother's, husband's, and children's affection. She is the centre of their household, the darling of all hearts and eyes, the consolation even of the grave old man, who, retired from official life, passes his time in reading, prayer, meditation, and deeds of mercy, and who is less proud of Alma as his heiress, and the future Baroness of Elverton, than fond of her as a good and lovely woman.

The last marriage that we have to record is that of Lieutenant Valerius Brightwell, R. N., and Miss Annella Wilder, which took place quite recently with great *éclât*. As the young couple were the joint heirs of Admiral Brunton, and as the bride was very young, and the bridegroom on the point of sailing on a distant service, it was arranged that they should fix their permanent residence at the Anchorage; and so, should old Mrs. Stilton be still unable to "to conquer her chronic malady of living," we shrink from surmising how many degrees of descendants she may have to look down upon.

Mrs. Corder and her thirteen children are made comfortable by the liberality of Eudora. The worthy little widow owns the neatly-furnished house and the well-stocked shop in which she lives happily and does a flourishing business. Her elder children are apprenticed to profitable trades, and the younger ones are put to good schools. Mrs. Corder was always so happy, even in her adversity, that she could scarcely be said to be more so now in her prosperity.

Allworth Abbey remains untenanted, closely shut up, and in charge of the housekeeper, Mrs. Vose, who prefers to live at the lodge, and who will not even be bribed to show the inside of the building—no, not even to the most curious and importunate of tourists.

The Barony of Leaton remains in abeyance.

Malcolm Montrose, on the part of his wife, draws the large revenues of the Abbey estates that are flourishing under the care of an able steward.

Whether Mr. Montrose will ever advance his wife's claim to the Barony of Leaton, or whether Eudora will ever have nerve enough to return to the scene of her terrible sorrows, remains an open question.

In the sunny land of her birth she is in the possession of all the happiness she is capable of enjoying—the love of a devoted husband, beautiful children, and faithful friends; an honorable position, an ample fortune, and good health. As for the rest, the scars of those early, deep wounds, they may possibly never be effaced in this world. As long as she lives on earth, perhaps some subjects and some memories will cause her cheek to blanch and her blood to curdle with a deadly soul-sickness; but we commend her, with all the stricken in heart and wounded in spirit, to that Benignant Power, which being "almighty to create," is also ALMIGHTY TO RENEW.

THE END.

ALADDIN'S LAMP.

Oh, had I but Aladdin's lamp,
  Though only for a day,
I'd try to find a link to bind
  The joys that pass away:
I'd try to bring an angel's wing
  Upon the earth again;
And build True Worth a throne on earth,
  A throne beloved by men!
It should be May—and always May—
  I'd wreathe the world with flowers;
I'd robe the barren wilderness,
  And bring life happy hours!

I'd soothe the lorn and desolate,
  Increase the widow's store:
And INDUSTRY should wear a smile
  It never wore before!
Where'er there dwelt unhappiness
  I'd speed my magic way;
And none should be in poverty,
  Nor *fear* the coming day!—
It should be May—and always May—
  I'd wreathe the world with flowers;
I'd robe the barren wilderness,
  And bring life happy hours!

SOWING AND REAPING.

BY J. F. SMITH,

AUTHOR OF "THE STEPMOTHER," "MINNIGREY," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XLI.

Thou lovedst Cordelia poor—receive her crowned;
The imperial unction fresh upon her brow.
KING LEAR.

At the moment of her rescue from the hands of Joe Eagleton, both Clara and her father were too much agitated to enter into such explanations as were necessary to establish the validity of the tie between them. From the information obtained from Mrs. Page, previous to his departure from England, Colonel Mordaunt felt that moral conviction which satisfies the heart—the striking likeness to her mother confirmed it.

With the assistance of his friends he bore her to the boat, which rowed with a hearty cheer from the crew, who, sailor-like, rejoiced at the success of their expedition. If any regret existed, it was at the escape of Paulo and his brothers. It went against their grain, as Englishmen, to have made conditions with such ruffians.

Hannah—who had acted so courageously during their imprisonment—began to feel a little hysterical now that the danger had passed, and indulged in a series of gesticulations and exclamations that highly amused her liberators.

"What would her missis say when she heerd it all? Jane Shore was nothink to what she had gone through!" In her excitement she modestly confessed that Miss Watson, the heroine of the Cobourg Theayter, had fallen considerably in her opinion since she had become a heroine herself. In the transports of her joy she threw her arms round the necks of Tom Mayfield and Harold, embracing each alternately, and then indulged in a good hearty cry.

The young men were evidently more embarrassed than gratified by this display of the maid-of-all work's feelings; and retreated to the bow of the boat, where Clara and her father were seated.

Hannah would have followed, but one of the sailors, a fine manly-looking fellow, with magnificent black whiskers, and the now all but exploded cork-screw curls dangling by the side of his ears restrained her.

"Can't part with you, miss," exclaimed the man; "derange the ballast."

"Ruffian! pirate!" shrieked the maid-of-all-work; determined to act the heroine to the last.

"Lord bless you!" interrupted the young man; "I aint nothink of the kind. I know it's your feelin's, and you can't help it. Very natteral, too, after been worried by a crew of Italian riggers; not that I thinks the worse on ye for that. It might a-been any honest gal's misfortin."

"Good gracious!" ejaculated Hannah; "what does he mean?"

"All right!" said the sailor. "If your feelin's overcomes you again, you can kiss me—I aint so dainty; but the young gents don't like it," he added.

The laugh of his companions effectually quieted the somewhat troublesome demonstrations of the maid-of-all-work, who, considering herself exceedingly ill-used, sobbed herself to sleep in the stern-sheet, in which one of the sailors, with characteristic gallantry, had wrapped her.

Although day had dawned before they reached Leghorn, not one of the party of travellers thought of retiring to rest; too many explanations had to be given and received. Tom and Clara both felt naturally anxious—the lover how far the new-found parent of his intended wife might approve of his daughter's engagement with the son of a simple farmer, and the poor persecuted girl to be convinced of her right to address the colonel by the sacred name of father.

Neither were kept long in suspense.

"Your mother," said the colonel, was the sister of that villain Parfit, who, on the event of her death without issue, became entitled, under the will of a distant relative, to the whole of the large fortune bequeathed to them jointly. I will not tire you," he continued, "by repeating the numerous unprincipled means he had had recourse to in order to prevent our marriage—slander and falsehood were the mildest of them. Finding himself likely to be baffled, he at last had recourse to violence, and kept his victim a prisoner in a lone house in the country till, as he believed, I had sailed with my regiment for India, when he relaxed his vigilance. Accident fortunately had delayed our embarkation, and on the last day of my stay in England she escaped with the assistance of Ann Betts, and joined me at the port where the vessels were stationed."

"My old, kind nurse," said Clara; "well do I recollect the name."

"A friend," continued the colonel, "the chaplain of the regiment, at once united us in marriage, and I bore my rescued bride to the land where you first saw the light. After a year or two of wedded happiness, the state of your dear mother's health rendered her return to England indispensable; war was then raging in our Indian possessions—a soldier's duty is a stern one—I dared not resign, or ask for leave of absence. She sailed without me.

"I cannot describe the agony of our parting," continued the speaker, in a tone broken by emotion. "It was prophetic. We never met again."

For several instants neither father nor daughter spoke; both had yielded to feelings too deep for words—almost too sad for tears.

"Young as you were," resumed her parent, "you have not forgotten your mother, Clara."

"Forgotten her!" repeated the agitated girl; "the recollection is as fresh within my heart as though Heaven had deprived me of her but yesterday. I remember her death-bed—the kisses that lingered with maternal fondness on my cheeks—her prayers and blessings."

"From the hour of her return to England," said the old soldier, recovering his firmness, "the cold, calculating fiend, her brother, had, it appears, surrounded her with his spies. By means which a long familiarity with crime alone could have made him acquainted with, he contrived to intercept our letters, and when she died, fancied the success of his villainous scheme assured."

"Parfit!" repeated Harold; "I have heard the name before. I recollect; he banks with my uncle."

"Are you the nephew of Sir Jasper Mansell?"

Our hero answered in the affirmative.

"The relationship does you, I fear, but little honor," observed the father of Clara. "He was one of the executors of the will under which my wife inherited her fortune, and acted most ungenerously by playing into the hands of her brother. All means of support for Ann Betts and children, after my wife's death, I have ascertained, were refused by him; and various attempts made to induce the faithful creature to give them up to their bitterest enemy. How the separation ultimately was accomplished I have yet to learn."

"Perhaps I can suggest the manner, father," observed Clara. "I perfectly recollect my poor nurse being taken to prison for debt. The woman in whose charge I and my brother were left grew tired of supporting us; then it was that Mr. Parfit stepped in, and, under the plea of providing for us in a charitable institution of which he was one of the governors, removed us to a distant part of the country."

"The monster!" ejaculated the colonel. "Charity—his charity!"

"At the age of ten," continued his daughter, "he apprenticed me to Madame Saubin, the ballet-mistress at the opera; with whom I remained till——"

A deep blush overspread the features of the poor girl, and she burst into tears; not even to a father could she find courage to relate the insults and persecutions she had endured from Captain Mansell. The old soldier folded her in his arms and kissed her fondly.

"I have heard it all," he said; "your struggles to support your suffering brother, your virtuous resistance of temptation, and the noble conduct of the friends your virtue and patience had gained. Calm yourself, my child; such trials can never occur again, henceforth you have a parent to protect you—a father's heart to shield you against the storms of life, a father's arm to avenge the shadow of an insult offered to you."

It is unnecessary to detail the further explanations that ensued. Colonel Mordaunt and his daughter were not only convinced of the reality of the tie that united them, but happy in the conviction. The recovery of the legal proofs they left to time and the decision of an over-ruling Providence.

At her father's entreaties, Clara consented at last to retire to rest, but before quitting the room she gave her hand to poor Tom Mayfield—whose feelings were divided between joy and fear at the discovery—and modestly presented her cheek to his lips.

"God bless you, my own true-hearted girl!" whispered her lover, as he imprinted a fervent kiss; "you have restored my courage—confirmed my hope."

Colonel Mordaunt pretended not to perceive the action, although he secretly smiled, and was about to follow his daughter, when the young farmer entreated him to remain.

"I cannot endure suspense," he said, "and deceit is still more abhorrent to my nature. You saw the kiss."

"Clara naturally feels grateful to her preserver," observed the old soldier.

"More than grateful."

"Possibly!"

"She loves me," replied Tom. "Little as I appear worthy of such a gift, her heart, her affections are mine. I won them honorably when I believed your daughter was poor; have proved my sincerity—I speak not of services; I would risk my life at any moment to save a good and virtuous girl from the hands of a rascal, and should blush were I capable of pleading that as a merit—but by truthfulness and constancy. I am the son of an honest, upright, but humble man—a simple farmer.

"What am I to expect?" he added.

"It is a great sacrifice to ask a father to part from the child he has yearned for years to embrace," replied the old soldier, seriously. "I must speak with my daughter before I reply to you."

"Did not her action on quitting the room answer for her?" demanded the lover, rendered eloquent by his fear of losing her.

"To a certain extent, perhaps, it did; but——"

"I understand you, sir," interrupted the young man, bitterly; "she will be rich."

"There you are mistaken," observed Colonel Mordaunt, coolly. "The fortune of my late wife, in the event of my being able to prove our marriage, is entailed strictly upon my son."

"Thank Heaven!" exclaimed Tom Mayfield, joyously; "thank Heaven! I would a hundred thousand times rather wed her poor."

"And if she consents, young man," said the father of Clara, extending his hand to him, "you shall wed her, though not so portionless as my words may have given you reason to suppose. I heard much good of you in England; your devotion in following her to Italy proves the sincerity of your passion. Your manly explanation with myself," he added, "has confirmed the good opinion I entertained of you. Are you satisfied?"

We will not attempt to give the reply of the happy lover, which was both incoherent and eloquent. We question whether his friend Harold, who heard and approved, could have repeated it.

"Heaven bless you with her, Tom!" said our hero, when the colonel had withdrawn; "I almost envy your happiness."

He sighed, and thought of Bianca.

"We shall be married on the same day, at the same hour, in the dear old church at Lowelstree!" exclaimed his friend, shaking him warmly by the hand; "I feel certain that we shall. Providence won't give the lie to my prediction."

Harold shook his head somewhat despondingly. The prospect of his union with the fair Italian appeared to him more remote than ever.

Although the great object of their journey to Leghorn had been happily accomplished, it was decided, at the suggestion of Colonel Mordaunt, that they should remain a week longer in the town, to give the late prisoners time to recover from the fatigue and agitation they had endured, and wait the arrival of the Victis, a British sloop of war, daily expected to arrive with the minister to the Court of Tuscany on board. The commander being an old friend of Clara's father, the latter felt certain of obtaining a passage home, both for himself and friends.

Signor Benetti expressed himself delighted at their stay. He had taken a great fancy to the society of our hero, who, in consequence of Tom's love affair, was enabled to devote no inconsiderable portion of his time to the wealthy merchant, whose conversation interested him, added to which he had another motive. The portrait of Bianca had excited his curiosity, and he felt convinced his host could give him important information respecting the exile and his daughter.

They were walking together the second morning after the adventure at Monte Nero, in the great *salon* of the house, when Harold stopped suddenly before the picture.

"It seems to interest you," said the signor.

"Deeply," replied his companion.

"I understand, as a work of art——"

Although the words amounted to an observation only, they were uttered in the tone of one who asks a question, and Harold was too sincere, too proud of his love for Bianca, not to reply to them.

"As the portrait of the only woman I can ever love, and who has promised one day to become my wife," he answered.

Signor Benetti smiled.

"I wish," continued the young man, "you would deal openly with me, and tell me the history of that picture. I ask no breach of confidence," he added; "you have only to say to me, 'I am forbidden to do so,' or that 'reasons exist why I should not gratify your curiosity,' never to be importuned by me upon the subject again."

"There is no very terrible secret connected with it," replied the merchant, "still there is one, and before I impart it I must have confidence for confidence."

"From me?"

"Yes."

"Demand it freely," exclaimed our hero, frankly; "I have nothing to conceal."

"You are the nephew of the great banker, Sir Jasper Mansell?"

"I am."

"And his heir?"

"No," replied Harold, laughingly, "nor ever likely to be. He has three children—a son and two daughters. My uncle and myself are on anything but friendly terms, I have offended him by my journey to Italy. His ways and principles are not my ways and principles. So far from being his heir, I do not expect the slightest assistance from him."

"Probably you do not require it," observed Signor Benetti, "and are rich enough without it?"

"On the contrary, I am poor—dependent upon my own exertions," answered the young man; "but what of that? I have health, youth, strength, hand and brain. The world is a wide field, and the soil far from ungrateful to those who labor earnestly."

"And yet you would marry the daughter of an exile, without friends or fortune?"

"Yes!"

"Imprudent!" said the merchant.

"As worldlings judge!" exclaimed our hero. "Thank Heaven! I have not that sin to answer for. I look forward to my union with Bianca as the crowning happiness of my life—the gift without which all other gifts were valueless—a blessing years of toil and struggle would but too cheaply purchase. On my return to England I shall immediately enter on a career of honorable exertion, and once master of a home, no matter how humble, ask her to share it with me.

"You smile," he added; "I would not change the prospect of passing my life with her for all your riches."

"That is singular," observed the signor.

"What is singular?" demanded Harold.

"The assertion you have just made," replied the merchant. "To speak plainly, I have taken a fancy to you. I am, as you are aware, a childless man, and had made up my mind to offer you the hand of my only niece, the heiress of the wealth you alluded to. Your marriage with her would make my old age happy."

"Are you serious?"

"Quite serious," said his host, anxiously.

"I am sorry for that," exclaimed the young Englishman, "for two reasons—first, because I appreciate your kindness to me; and, secondly, that I am compelled to disappoint you."

"Have you any idea how vast a sum my fortune amounts to?" urged the merchant.

"Were it ten times greater than it is," interrupted his guest, impatiently, "it would not tempt me to break my faith to the dear girl to whom my heart's first vows were given. You jest with me," he contined, "for I have given you no reason to think so vilely of me. You are the friend of Signor Muzetti, and would not urge me to break my pledged love with his daughter."

"A jest, a dream—think of it as you will," said the old man, "or, rather, think of it no more."

"And your promise?"

"What promise?"

"The history of the portrait," answered Harold.

"Is soon told," replied his companion. "Muzetti held the honorable post of professor of civil law at Pisa. Few men were more distinguished for learning and, unfortunately for himself, for patriotism than my friend. His lectures drew crowds from every part of Italy. The young hung entranced upon the burning eloquence of his words when he alluded to past glories of his country, their hearts beat with patriot hopes when he dwelt upon the future. The aged and more cautious listened in approving silence. The extraordinary popularity he obtained attracted the attention of the government. Ministers sought to buy him over by honors, wealth; both were rejected. They ejected him from his professor's chair, and the teacher in the eyes of his pupils became a martyr."

"A glorious distinction," observed his hearer.

"But a dangerous one in a country like ours," continued the signor. "Muzetti became a marked man; spies dogged his footsteps; every word he uttered was reported, and exaggerated most probably by the police. At last they arrested him. For two years he endured all the horrors—*tortures*," added the speaker, lowering his voice to a whisper, as if afraid of being overheard, "that tyranny could inflict; fine and confiscation followed, and when his persecutors had beggared him in fortune and intellect, as they believed, they placed him and his infant child on board a vessel bound for America, in the full confidence that he could not survive the voyage."

"Wretches! Is is possible that in the land of Cato and of——"

"Hush," interrupted his host, with a calm smile, "you forget I am the devoted adherent of Austrian rule in Italy. From America the father of Bianca succeeded in obtaining the means of returning to Europe, and settled himself in London as a picture-dealer. On several occasions, for I pitied the man, I found means of serving him; and his daughter, out of gratitude, sent me her portrait. She is represented removing the veil which covers her father's bust—an allegory expressive of her belief that the time will come when the name now branded by an infamous condemnation will be honored by every son of Italy."

"Poor old man!" murmured our hero; "I can understand him now—his sorrow, apathy; Bianca's pride in him, and devoted love."

"Yes, yes," muttered Benetti; "the girl is an enthusiast."

"Has he no other relatives?"

"A brother," answered the signor, with real or affected indifference; "devoted, like myself, to the present state of government."

"The slave!" ejaculated Harold Mansell, with involuntary contempt.

The countenance of his host became very pale.

"Pardon me," added the young Englishman, "for having pained you—you who have been so kind to me, to whom I owe so much; but the tale of Muzetti's wrongs and sufferings excited me beyond the exercise of sober reason."

"You judged and spoke like a boy," observed the Italian, grasping his arm, "yielding to the force of first impressions. Should you live till your hair is as white as mine, you will discover how fallacious they are. It is not always the bravest soldier that dies amid the shouts of battle—endurance has its heroes. The man you branded with the name of 'slave' was engaged in commerce. The fortunes of a dozen families—the bread of the aged and the young was in his hands; he dared not, he had no right to cast it on the troubled sea of anarchy and revolution."

"A strange country and a strange people!" thought our hero, as his host quitted the *salon* and directed his steps across the court-yard to the offices where his mercantile affairs were carried on. "I know not what to make of him. Could he have been serious in offering me the hand of his niece, the heiress of his enormous wealth? It matters but little," he added, after a pause, "whether he spake in jest or earnest. Here is the shrine at which I worship; my lips shall never breathe a vow at any other."

Harold Mansell turned to the portrait of Bianca, which to his excited imagination appeared to smile upon him for his constancy, and remained contemplating it for a considerable time in silence.

When Signor Benetti entered his counting-house he found a considerable number of foreign letters waiting his arrival. Several were from England. He perused them carefully, first examining the seals, to ascertain whether or not they had been tampered with.

"As usual," he muttered to himself, in a tone of disgust—"as usual! but I shall disappoint them."

Selecting several which he felt assured had been opened, he inclosed them in an envelope, and, calling to one of his clerks, bade him take them at once to the chief of the police.

Had the mind of the merchant been less occupied, he might have read an expression of disappointment in the looks of the man, who had been nearly thirty years in his service.

"Call at Pasta and Geraud's on your way back, and inquire what bills they can let me have on Paris and London."

"Yes, sir."

"And make out Lafite's accounts."

"They are ready, sir."

"'Tis well. Hasten with the letters I have given you; they are of the utmost importance."

Pietro Charrille, the name of the clerk, made a pretence of haste until he had crossed the court-yard, and could no longer be seen from the counting-house windows, when he slackened his pace, and walked more leisurely. He knew that the letters were of little consequence, the chief of the police having already seen them.

For thirty years he had been a spy upon the man whose bread he ate, and, what perhaps was still more singular, his employer knew it. The knowledge had enabled Signor Benetti to baffle more than one scheme laid for his destruction.

CHAPTER XLII.

By Heaven there's treason in his aspect!
That cheerless gloom, those eyes that peer on earth,
That bended body, and those folded arms,
Are indications of a tortured mind,
And blazon equal villainy and shame. SHIRLEY.

Malvalio Malveletti, the chief of the police of Leghorn, although nominally the third or fourth authority in the city—for the governors, civil and military, both ranked before him—was in reality the first. The Grand Duke, a mere vassal of Austria, appointed the last-named functionaries, generally men of high rank and little capacity. The imperial cabinet at Vienna *recommended* the first, an agent upon whom they could rely—a devoted adherent, whose dependence on the sovereign of the country was nominal rather than real.

The means which this dreaded personage held in his hands of informing himself of all that passed, not only in public life, but in the most secret affairs of the inhabitants, were as various as they were immoral. The opening of letters at the post-office was regarded as one of the simplest as well as readiest—a fact so well understood, that few persons trusted their real correspondence to the State, but sent all important communications by private hands. Spies were everywhere employed. The hotels, counting-houses, *cafés*, and even the workshops of the town, teemed with them. For years the system had been so well organized, that the employment became looked upon as respectable, rather than otherwise.

When tampering with letters and espionage failed, Signor Malvalio had other and yet more terrible instruments at his command—the knives of men whose lives were already forfeited to justice by their crimes, who lived only by sufferance or bribes—for in the days we are writing of, no Italian functionary, however well paid, was above receiving a *buono mano*, aye, and asking for it, too, from the poorest as well as dirtiest of hands. Assassins were as common as the members of any other trade or profession in the free port of Leghorn, and almost as much respected.

In person, this dreaded functionary was every way worthy of the office he filled, and the infernal skill he displayed in it. The head, as if oppressed by the weight of infamy, generally inclined upon his breast. It was only when excited that he held it, like the rattle-snake, boldly erect. In fact, we are not quite sure we have not committed an injustice to the reptile by the comparison. The serpent generally gives warning to its victims before making the deadly spring—the signor gave none. His features were sullen and pale with the hue, perchance of his own thoughts. In the expression of the eyes there was something positively demoniac. Their glance seemed to penetrate to the very brain and heart of his victims, and read with cruel cunning their thoughts, and then produce them as evidence against them.

The affair at Monte Nero had caused him considerable annoyance. The English Consul had made indignant remonstrances at Paulo and his brothers being still at liberty; and, as an Ambassador was daily expected to land at Leghorn, things looked less pleasantly than the signor could have wished.

He was debating with himself whether or not to sacrifice the three ruffians as a peace-offering, when Benetti's clerk arrived with the packet of letters.

The chief of the police broke the seal of the envelope, and glanced carelessly over them—not one was wanting; as for their contents he knew them already.

"Your master's cunning or subserviency, I know not which, appears inexhaustible," he exclaimed, in a dissatisfied tone. "Either there are no means of detecting him, or he is truly honest."

The messenger shrugged his shoulders—an action, in an Italian, which frequently implies more than words can do.

"Speak out; which is it?"

"Cunning," answered the clerk, boldly.

The eyes of Malvalio sparkled terribly.

"You know how rich he is?"

"Yes, yes!" continued the clerk.

"He has remitted nearly a million of lira within the last month to Paris."

"I know he has."

"I am commanded to inquire of Pasta and Giraud whether they have any more bills to dispose of," added the spy. "Does not that look as if he were realizing his immense fortune, with the intention of quitting the country?"

"It may be so," observed the chief of the police; "but, even if your suspicions should prove correct, I have no means of preventing it. He has authority to do so from——"

"The Grand Duke?" exclaimed the clerk, seeing he hesitated.

The signor could scarcely repress a smile of contempt at the question.

"Of course; who else could give it? The proceeding is a pretence—operations to maintain the credit of the Austrian loan on the Exchange at Paris. If I had only time to communicate with——"

The rest was left unspoken.

Malvalio reflected for a few instants, then turning suddenly upon the spy, asked him whether he slept in the house of Signor Benetti.

"For the last twenty years," was the reply.

"And have the keys?"

"Of everything but the iron chest; those he never parts with."

"We do not require them. You could admit a trustworthy agent or two, if needful," observed the signor, "into the house, after your master and his English guests have retired to rest."

"Certainly, if his excellency wishes it."

His excellency did wish it; and it was arranged by the chief and his equally worthy agent, that the latter should, on the following night, admit three persons into the house of his employer charged to examine the papers of Signor Benetti, and, in the event of finding anything to compromise him, to arrest him.

What his real instructions were will appear hereafter.

The faithless clerk had not taken his departure more than an hour before Paulo made his appearance; in their transactions with the police, it was the elder brother alone the chief deigned to enter into explanations with. The ruffian—the terror of Leghorn—had received a summons that he dared not disobey, and came with fear and trembling; with all his ferocious courage and cunning, he found himself like a fly involved in the web of a spider—struggle as he would, the meshes still enclosed him, and the venomous insect—to carry out the simile—could pounce upon its prey whenever it thought fit.

As a matter of prudence he brought an offering with him. Like some Eastern pasha, Signor Malvalio expected a present from all who approached his presence. Benetti's refusal to gratify his avarice was one, if not the chief cause, of the hatred the petty tyrant honored him with.

The frown upon the brow of the chief of the police gradually dispersed as he counted the contents of the little bag of scudi his visitor silently placed upon the table beside him.

"*Caspillo!*" he exclaimed, "those who employ you must pay you well. I think I had better change places with you." And he laughed aloud.

Paulo grinned. "His excellency was pleased to be facetious."

There was something terrible in the idea of the facetiousness of Malvalio.

"The last affair," observed the great man, "is an awkward one."

"A trifle, signor," interrupted Paulo; "a trifle—two troublesome girls and a youth whom their friends wished to keep out of the way. Only a sailor shot."

"By you?"

"No, signor," replied the man, eagerly; "by the party who attacked the Casa Nero."

"The English consul has made reclamation."

Paulo shrugged his shoulders.

"Threatened to write to the minister at Florence."

Whilst his excellency continued gracious to him he did not fear the minister.

"Look you," said Malvalio, "service for service."

His visitor glanced at the bag of scudi still lying on the table, which the speaker coolly swept into a drawer, then proceeded with the conversation.

"I have reasons to suspect the intentions of Benetti, the merchant, to realize his fortune and abandon Tuscany. It must be prevented."

"Nothing more easy."

"But not by death," added the chief of the police. "I dare not take that risk. Now you are skillful in the use of the knife. A wound that would disable him, confine him to his bed for a week or two."

"Nothing more easy," exclaimed the ruffian, with a grin, "provided I can obtain admission to the house. He never walks abroad alone, or unarmed."

"That can be arranged; but remember, his life, for the present, must be sacred."

The details of the atrocious plan were coolly discussed between the speakers, and an hour afterwards the notorious Paulo quitted the office of the police with his head erect, and casting looks of defiance upon all who passed him. He felt that he was still the terror of Leghorn.

His brothers, who had been waiting for him on the Via Grandi, speedily joined him. They three entered the nearest *café* and called for wine.

"You remained a long time," observed the youngest; "I began to fear."

"Pshaw!" replied the elder ruffian, pompously, "Malvalio cannot do without me."

"You brought the dollars back with you, then?"

"No, curse him!" muttered the ruffian, "he took them. Had I known his projects, the number should have been less."

"He has employment for us?"

"Yes."

"When?"

"To-morrow night."

"And where?"

"At the house of Benetti; Pietro, the clerk, is to give us admission. It suits my plan. I have another commission, and can execute both at the same time."

"The English captain in the prison?"

Paulo nodded in the affirmative.

The brothers held a consultation whether the opportunity of entering the house of the richest merchant in Leghorn might not be turned to greater advantage than the mere fact of pleasing the chief of the police, who, if he protected, did not forget to tax their earnings heavily. The conversation was carried on in a low tone, but the precaution might have been dispensed with, few persons caring to approach the table occupied by three of the most notorious ruffians in the city.

As soon as they had finished their wine, they quitted the *café*, and strolled leisurely toward the port, crowded with vessels from all parts of the world, but especially from England and America.

On one of the latter they went on board.

On the very day the events we have described took place in Leghorn, a circumstance of almost equal importance occurred in England. Sir Jasper Mansell received a second and still more threatening visit from Mr. Harper, who, from some unknown cause, exercised so terrible an ascendancy over him. To do the little man justice, he came against his will, urged to it by the reproaches of his wife, and the tears of his only child, who, at the opera the preceding night, had witnessed the flirtation of the captain with Lady Selina. The neglect of the intended husband was not only apparent, but most insulting. He never quitted for an instant the side of his fair enslaver, who, conscious of her triumph, cast from time to time disdainful glances at her plebeian rival.

What rendered the conduct of the faithless Lothario still more galling was the encouragement it received from his mother and elder sister. As for Jane, the good-natured, gentle girl pitied her future sister-in-law, and endeavored to atone for her brother's unkindness by such little attentions as she dared bestow.

The baronet listened to the complaints of his visitor in gloomy silence. He knew how slight was the influence he possessed over his son.

"It must end," said Harper, raising his voice to a tone of menace. "I cannot suffer the peace of my family to be destroyed by the heartlessness of an unfeeling puppy, whose pride I can crush by a single word. If in three days he is not the husband of my insulted, outraged child, the terrible secret shall be made known."

Sir Jasper mechanically repeated the words "three days," and looked at the windows of the room in which Mark Chambers was dying.

"You press me hardly," he observed. "I have kept my part of our compact; it is not my fault that my son rebels against the sacrifice."

"It is through your weakness," replied Mr. Harper.

"What can I do?"

"Explain the position in which his conduct places you. Tell him your reputation—*your life*," added the visitor, sternly, "depends upon the marriage. Let him clearly understand the choice whilst there is yet time to choose—a wealthy bride or a beggar's heritage; the rank he is so proud of or a felon's name."

"What!" exclaimed the baronet, "ask me to proclaim my infamy to my own son! stand in his presence a self-condemned assassin! Never, never! rather death a thousand times! Look you, Harper; we once were friends—it is not my fault that we are not so still. You reaped quite as much advantage from the deed as I did; name any sum you please to give up those fatal notes—half my fortune—and it shall be yours; I will pay the fine most gladly."

"No."

"You dare not. You have betrayed the secret to your wife. It is she who is urging you to this extremity. I can read an angry woman's vengeance in the part you are acting."

At this accusation, which was unpleasantly near the truth, his visitor winced and looked confused, for he had promised to keep it faithfully from everp living creature.

"I have but one answer," he said, recovering himself quickly. "In three days."

"Enough; we understand each other," interrupted Sir Jasper, coldly. "Now leave me; I must see my son."

"Explain to him——"

"Enough," repeated the banker, pointing to the door. "I have three days to breathe, to reflect, to collect my thoughts. The time is not so long that you should abridge it by one instant. Leave me; I must act, not talk."

Mr. Harper scowled angrily, but offered no reply. So strong was his desire to see his child the wife of Captain Mansell, he would have endured any insult, committed any crime his cowardly nature would have permitted him, to achieve it. Without uttering another word, he quitted the room.

"Viper!" muttered Sir Jasper, looking after him; "compared with his, my crimes appear like virtue; they, at least, had courage to redeem them. That I should live in fear of such a miserable thing! a cold, calculating machine—a head without heart or honor! He was deeper in the villainy than myself; but, with devilish cunning, withheld his hand from the deed he was the first to plan. The proofs of his complicity still exist—I feel certain of it—Clement was too cautious to have destroyed them. Would that I had them! every shilling I possess were too little to pay the purchase."

"Will vengeance never die?" he resumed, looking a second time at the window of Mark Chambers; "to think that I know where they lie hid, yet dare not place my hand upon them!"

During the morning the captain called upon him, and the unhappy man made a last appeal to his sense of honor, to fulfill at once the engagement he had voluntarily entered into. The heartless *roué* listened to him impatiently.

"Not my fault:" he said; "fact is you tempted me; but I am not in want of money now. Besides, the connection is low, vulgar; neither my mother nor sister can endure the thought of it."

"Better that than shame," thought the baronet.

"Besides," added his son, "I—I really prefer another."

"Hear me, Augustus," said his father; "so great is my desire to redeem my word to Harper, that I will make any sacrifice you choose—half—more—all I possess—the fortune of your sisters—upwards of a million! The bank itself!"

His son was startled no less at the magnitude of the offer than the tone of desperation in which it was made.

"Father," he said, for the first time speaking seriously, "I fear you have placed yourself in the power of this Harper."

The baronet hung his head.

"If so, let me advise you to release yourself by some more honorable way than the sacrifice of your name and son. The marriage is impossible."

"Impossible!" repeated the banker, wildly.

"I am the husband of Lady Selina; three days since we were privately married."

From the instant he heard the avowal, Sir Jasper Mansell appeared an altered man. There was neither hesitation nor weakness in his conduct; his manner became firm, collected, and almost dignified.

"I forgive you, Augustus," he said, "for you know not what you have done; and have but one request to make."

"Name it, pray name it!" exclaimed the delighted son.

"Let your marriage be kept a secret for three days longer."

"Weeks, if you desire it."

"Three days will suffice," repeated his father, coldly. "In point of family, the choice you have made is unexceptionable. Is Lady Mansell aware of your union?"

"She sanctioned it by her presence."

"I thought so," muttered the banker, bitterly. "Remember, three days! after that period," he added, "you may announce it to the world. Now you must leave me; I have many things to arrange. You little imagine the embarrassment your disobedience has occasioned me."

During the rest of the day Sir Jasper conducted the business of the bank with his usual clear-headed sagacity; received and answered the most important letters as calmly as though nothing had occurred to occupy his mind. No one who transacted business with him could have imagined for an instant how fearful a doom hung over him. At the hour of closing the cashier came, as usual, with bills, drafts, and acceptances for him to sign.

"Have you heard how Mark Chambers is?" inquired the baronet, as he wrote his name the last time in a clear, bold hand.

"Still very ill," replied John Ledger.

"What does the doctor say?"

"The obstinate old man refuses all advice; the porter says he may last three or four days longer—perhaps a week."

"A week!" repeated his employer; "did you say a week?"

"Yes, Sir Jasper. Any further directions?"

"No."

The cashier bowed respectfully, and quitted the room.

"Would Harold were here!" murmured the guilty man; "I feel as if I could confide in him; but I have deprived myself of his assistance by my own act. Would he have assisted me?" he added, musingly. "Yes, for he has a heart to pity as well as condemn. Regret is useless. As I have sown so must I reap, and perform my dreadful task alone."

With a steady hand Sir Jasper Mansell opened the iron chest that stood in one of the recesses, and drew from it several massive keys, which appeared covered with rust. He examined them attentively, and began to rub it off. Suddenly he started and let them fall upon the floor.

"Blood!" he murmured; "it is blood upon them, not rust. Will the stain never be effaced? God!" he added, "what a life of misery and self-contempt has one bad action entailed!"

Stooping, he raised the keys and thrust them into his pocket. Soon afterwards the clock struck the hour of closing the bank; and the wealthy Sir Jasper Mansell, amid the bows of his clerks and the obsequious smiles of his customers, walked through the outward office to his carriage.

Could they have read what was passing in his mind, few would have envied him.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

POCKET PICKING.

As the readers of the LEDGER are generally sober, industrious and intelligent people, who mind their own business and lay up money, some of which they probably carry about with them, it becomes them to "look out for pick-pockets;" especially as these light-fingered gentry now not only frequent places of amusement and public gatherings, but also attend church and funerals, haunt ferry-boats, cars and omnibuses, and lounge on street corners. Victims multiply daily. Every morning we read of some lady having been robbed of her watch or port-monnaie, or of some gentleman having had his pocket cut out and his pocket-book carried off.

A few mornings since, a lady, while crossing Canal street, at its junction with Broadway, had her pocket picked of a port-monnaie containing over six hundred dollars. Fortunately, a laboring man, who was passing at the moment and saw the operation, grabbed the pick-pocket just as he had secured the prize. Finding himself detected, the villain threw the port-monnaie among the crowd, and, in the confusion, escaped. The lady, who thus fortunately recovered her money, offered the laborer a handsome reward, which he politely declined, saying he had only done his duty, and *was not a policeman!*

THE WISE MAN.

The cast of mind which is natural to a discreet man, makes him look forward into futurity, and consider what will be his condition millions of ages hence, as well as what it is at present. He knows that the misery or happiness which are reserved for him in another world, lose nothing of their reality by being at so great a distance from him. The objects do not appear little to him because they are remote. He considers that those pleasures and pains which lie hid in eternity, approach nearer to him every moment, and will be present with him in their full weight and measure, as much as those pains and pleasures which he feels at this very instant. For this reason he is careful to secure to himself that which is the proper happiness of his nature, and the ultimate design of his being. He carries his thoughts to the end of every action, and considers the more distant as well as the most immediate effects of it. He supercedes every little prospect of gain and advantage which offers itself here, if he does not find it consistent with his views of a hereafter. In a word, his hopes are full of immortality, his schemes are large and glorious, and his conduct suitable to one who knows his true interest, and how to pursue it by proper methods.

DARK HOURS.

There are dark hours—dark hours, that mark the history of the brightest year. For not a whole month in any of the thousand of the past, perhaps, has the sun shone brilliantly all the time. And there have been cold and stormy days in every year. And yet the mists and shadows of the darkest hours were dissipated, and flitted heedlessly away. The cruelest of the ice fetters have been broken and dissolved, and the most furious storm loses its power to alarm.

And what a parable is all this of human fear of our inside world, where the heart works at its destined labor. Here, too, we have the overshadowing of dark hours, and many a cold blast chills the heart to its core. But what matters it? Man is born a hero, and it is only by darkness and storms that heroism gains its greatest and best development and illustration—then it kindles the black cloud into a blaze of glory, and the storm bears it rapidly to its destiny. Despair not, then. Disappointment will be realized. Mortifying failure may attend this effort, and that one—but only be honest and struggle on, and it will all work well.

ANNOYANCES.—Would you touch a nettle without being stung by it?—Take hold of it stoutly. Do the same to other annoyances, and few things will ever annoy you.

THE FANE.

BY AN OLD CONTRIBUTOR.

I.

In the Sun, or the cloud, or the heart, or the brain,
There is glowing forever a mystical Fane;
Its pillars are diamond, its portals are gold,
With a scroll-work of amethyst over them rolled;
And its glorious dome of clear crystal afar
In the holy, blue Heaven, is capp'd by a star.

II.

I stand by the portal; what melody flows
In a hymn whose soft thunder seems never to close!
I look through the portal; what bright seraphim
Seem in swoon with the ecstasy breathed from the hymn,
As they kneel round an Altar of beryl and fire,
Whose quick-flashing tongues to the great roof aspire!

III.

Still the high hymn is sounding: the thunders still roll:
How they break in soft melody over the soul!
And hark to the burden—"Jehovah, Thy throne
On Eternity's pyramid towers alone!
What are we, what are we, by Thy glorious throne,
On Eternity's pyramid planted alone!"

INDIAN TREACHERY.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

During the early settlement of what is now called Pendleton county, in Virginia—a wild, mountainous region—one Captain Seybert erected a fort as a protection for his own and neighboring families against the incursions of the Indians. Like all the border forts of the day, it was simply constructed of cabins and palisades, but was strong enough, if properly garrisoned, to resist the attack of an enemy who could bring no more formidable weapons against it than muskets, hatchets, and burning arrows.

Bitter hostilities subsequently commenced between the whites and Indians, and about forty persons of both sexes and different ages took refuge in the fort. Here for some time they remained unmolested, occasionally hearing startling rumors of what the savages were doing in other quarters, and on two or three occasions getting sight of small parties that were evidently abroad on scouting or reconnoitering expeditions, and not strong enough to attack a fortified station.

For some time previous to the events we are about to relate, no Indians had been seen in the vicinity, and the inmates of the fort began to congratulate themselves that they would entirely escape molestation.

"Brother," said one of the ladies one day, addressing Colonel Dyer, who, with his family, had taken refuge in the station, "don't you think we might venture up to our dwelling in safety? There are some few little things that in the hurry of moving down here we overlooked, and I should not only like to get them, but see the house once more besides."

"Well," replied the colonel, "I can't say I think there is any particular danger just at present, for I am inclined to believe the savages have all withdrawn from this quarter. Still there is no telling, of course, what moment they may return, and if they should happen to catch us, it would be a bad business. What do you think, Captain Seybert?" he added, addressing the proprietor of the fort, who was standing within hearing.

"I hardly know what to advise, Colonel. Everything looks quiet enough, to be sure, but then one cannot say, in these times, that it may not be the calm which precedes the storm."

"Don't go," said Mrs. Dyer, earnestly, addressing her husband. "I fear something will happen."

"You always do, wife," replied Colonel Dyer, with a laugh. "I believe I never went out in my life with your consent. You are a great deal too timid for the backwoods."

"Well, what is the use of going?" persisted the other. "The things that sister wants are of little consequence, and as to the gratification of her curiosity, I look upon that as absolutely foolish. Why put your lives in jeopardy for a mere whim? for really it is nothing more."

"Now, by my faith, I will go, if only to prove your fears a mere whim, my timid wife!" laughed the colonel. "So put on your things, sister, and come along."

The wife made no further objection, but as her husband passed through the gate with his sister, her heart seemed to be in her mouth, and she retired into her cabin with her family, and gave way to tears.

All at once a wild cry and confusion of voices drew her forth into the area of the fort, where she found men, women and children running to and fro in the greatest state of excitement and alarm—some shouting, some screaming, and some pallid, silent, and ready to faint with terror.

"Run! run! for your lives!" shouted one who stood looking through a loop-hole.

"They'll have 'em! they'll have 'em! the cussed hounds!" cried another.

"Be ready at the gates there! don't let them wait a moment!" commanded a third.

"Oh, my God! my God! they'll be murdered, and we too!" shrieked a terrified female, wringing her hands.

Mrs. Dyer comprehended that her husband was in danger, that her presentiment was being fulfilled, and, overcome by the intense agony of her feelings, she clasped her temples with her hands, and sunk fainting to the earth.

The scene outside the fort was terribly exciting to the poor inmates, for there a large body of Shawnee Indians, uttering wild whoops and yells, were in close pursuit of Colonel Dyer and his sister, who were straining every nerve to reach the gates, which had already been thrown open to receive them, the different parties standing there all urging them forward with shouts and gestures of the wildest description.

"There! it is all over with them! they are lost!" cried Captain Seybert, as some three or four of the foremost savages laid hold of Colonel Dyer and his sister and checked their flight within a hundred yards of the fort. "Quick! quick! close the gates! or we shall all be in their clutches!" he added, as the main body of the Indians pressed forward past the captives.

The gates were instantly swung to and fastened, but not a moment too soon, for a volley of balls lodged in the thick timbers and the savages pressed up with yells of fury..

"Well, you red niggers, we'll teach you that we can fire back," said Captain Seybert's son, a brave lad of fifteen, as he thrust his rifle through one of the loop-holes and stretched one of the foremost assailants on the earth.

Snatching another rifle from the hands of a timid man, who stood irresolute and even trembling by his side, he fired a second shot and brought down another savage.

"Whoop!" he shouted, with boyish exultation; "how do you like that for a beginning?" and closing the loop-hole, he proceeded with the utmost haste to reload his piece, at the same time urging the others to fire and make every shot tell. "Don't be alarmed!" he said encouragingly, and with the spirit of a true hero; "there are not more than fifty of the heathen, and, with proper vigilance, caution and courage, we could defend the fort against twice that number and make the painted imps of Satan too glad to retire."

Had the others displayed the firmness and courage of this heroic youth, we should have had a different tale to record; but unfortunately a panic had seized upon nearly all, and they ran to and fro in the greatest trepidation and confusion, the men seeming almost as much terrified as the women and children. At this juncture, a clear, ringing voice called out:

"Give up fort, and Injun no kill. Injun friend—don't want to kill white brudder."

"There! there! do you hear that? they will treat with us!" cried one of the more timid. "We can easily make friends with them, and save our lives at least."

"Treat! friends!" rejoined young Seybert, with an expression of contempt. "No! let us rather fight to the death, and kill every scoundrel that dares to show us a mark!"

With this, having reloaded his rifle, he again opened the loop-hole, and seeing the Indian who had just spoken, standing at no great distance, and who from his appearance was undoubtedly a chief, he brought his piece to bear on him, and was in the very act of pulling the trigger, when his father ran up and caught hold of the gun.

"Stop, my son," he said, "you are too rash—you will bring destruction upon the whole of us! Did you not hear? the savages will treat with us. It is useless to talk of defending the fort—we are too weak—and by surrendering now, before their blood becomes too heated, we shall save the lives of all."

"Don't think of it, father," expostulated the youth, reddening with anger and shame. "In the first place, it is cowardly; and in the second place, it will not avail us—for the moment these treacherous scoundrels get possession of the place, they will butcher us like dogs."

"Silence, boy, and give heed to those who are older, wiser and more experienced than you. What do you know? a mere youth, that never saw ten Indians before in your life. I tell you we must surrender, and that ends the matter."

"But you'll find that won't end the matter," grumbled the youth, as he turned sullenly away. "Oh, for ten good *men*," he added, "and the privilege of fighting and dying like a soldier instead of a dog!"

"We will surrender, on condition that all our lives shall be spared!" called out Captain Seybert, through the loop-hole, to the chief, who was waiting for an answer.

"Good!" returned the savage. "Me big chief—no lie. Injun no kill—no hurt—everybody live."

"I will come out to you, and we will agree upon the terms," rejoined the captain.

"Ugh! good! Yes—white brudder come. Warrior no kill—no hurt. Me big chief—no lie. Good! ugh!"

After a hurried consultation with the principal men of the garrison, Captain Seybert, bearing in one hand a hastily constructed flag of truce, left the fort by a wicket, to confer with the savage chief. The latter came forward to meet him, and the painted warriors formed a large circle round him, but kept at a respectful distance. The interview was watched from the fort with the most intense interest, and with some degree of joy, nearly all believing that by a judicious sacrifice of their personal effects their lives and the fort would be spared. Young Seybert walked sullenly apart from the excited crowd, and, casting himself down on the ground, knit his young brows and bit his lips in silence.

In a few minutes Captain Seybert and the chief came toward the entrance, and the whole crowd of warriors followed them.

"Throw open the gates, my friends!" said the captain. "Thank God, all is settled! The good chief here, who is no other I find than the famous Killbuck, offers reasonable terms; and as soon as we shall have given him and his warriors what I have promised, they will all withdraw and leave us in peace."

"Ugh!" grunted the chief; "me Killbuck—me big chief—big chief no lie. Ugh! good!"

At the mention of that dread name, celebrated in the border annals as a word of terror, men, women and children turned pale, and more than one secretly regretted that the advice of the son had not rather been taken than that of the father. But no voice was even now raised against opening the gates, and the next minute they were thrown wide to the dusky horde, who at once came pouring in with such looks of savage triumph as made the most hopeful heart quail.

Captain Seybert now made known to his friends the terms of surrender—the amount of money, goods and personal effects to be given to the savages—and urged all to hasten and put them in possession of the chief as quick as possible. In a few minutes everything agreed upon was brought forward, and either placed in his hands or laid at his feet.

"More!" said Killbuck, his features beginning to assume a ferocious aspect.

"You have all we agreed to give," said Captain Seybert, respectfully.

"White man lie!" rejoined Killbuck, fiercely, and with the back of his tomahawk he struck the captain in the mouth, knocking in his front teeth; then whirling the weapon aloft, he brought the edge down upon his skull and clove him to the brain.

As he fell dead at the feet of the monster, there arose a simultaneous shriek of horror from the terrified whites, which was responded to by the wildest yells of triumph on the part of the savages. This was indeed the signal for the beginning of an awful work of butchery. At once knocking down and braining most of the men, they next collected the shrieking women and children into two rows, about ten feet apart, and appointed two of their warriors to the hellish work of murdering them in detail. These two fiends, each beginning at the head of his line, killed old and young in succession. Only a few were spared, whom the caprice of the bloody and treacherous chief wished to have carried into a hopeless captivity.

Young Seybert, believing his own doom sealed, still remained on the ground where he had first thrown himself, apparently a quiet spectator of the bloody work; and Killbuck, observing this, and feeling a sort of savage admiration of such unusual stoicism, went up to him, and said:

"Ugh! much brave! good! Go live with Killbuck—be big chief sometime."

"My father, whom you so basely murdered, saved your cursed life!" returned the youth, setting his teeth hard. "I had my rifle covering your black heart, but he wouldn't let me fire."

Instead of showing anger, Killbuck laughed.

"Little rascal," he said, "you fire—you kill me—you save fort. Me big chief. Me shot—warrior get scared—all run away. Ugh! good! Little rascal, come with Killbuck."

Having completed their horrid work of butchery, the savages plundered the dwellings, collected such valuables as they could carry with them, and then set the fort on fire. As the flames mounted heavenward, roaring and crackling over the bodies of the gory dead, they marched off into the deep forest with their living prisoners, which included Colonel Dyer and his sister. Of those who lived and escaped to tell the tragic tale in after times, we are happy to say the heroic young Seybert was one, and a braver heart never levelled rifle at a savage foe.

KNIGHT KUNO.

A BALLAD.

FROM THE GERMAN OF A. WALCHNER.

BY JAMES NACK.

Countess! oft your smile bewitching
  Would my heart entrance,
While the zephyrs of the valley
  Fanned me in their dance.

Glad I saw you coming hither,
  Gladder saw you nigh;
But too soon, with tears of anguish,
  From you I must fly.

Thus he spoke in tones of sorrow,
  And with tearful eyes;
Scarce a word more can he utter,
  For all comfort flies.

Her with tenderest emotion
  To his heart he prest,
Weeping forth the love and sorrow
  That convulsed his breast.

While his arms are still around her
  Rings the battle-cry,
And his page, in terror hastening,
  Wild and pale, comes nigh.

"Knight! no longer must thou tarry,
  For the foe is near;
Listen to the warlike tidings
  That have brought me here!"

Starting at those words of terror
  Deep the countess sighs;
Yet she prays and looks to heaven
  With confiding eyes.

Prest her lips his fervent kisses
  Ere he turned away,
Then he blest her—then the summons
  Hastened to obey.

Leaping lightly on his courser
  To his troop he spurred;
Grasping sword and spear he found them
  Waiting for his word.

As he rode, the cry of battle
  Higher swelled and higher,
For the wand of peace was broken
  And revenge on fire.

Rushed away the weeping lady
  With a heavy heart;
From the hated scene she hurried
  Where they met to part.

So returned she to her kindred,
  Sighing night and day,
With him all of joy had left her,
  Hope had fled away.

Marched the army to the Danube,
  Flushed with valor's glow,
While the drums and trumpets thundered
  Terror to the foe.

Throngs of foes the sword of Kuno
  Scattered far and wide;
But like them, his joys were scattered,
  Fled on every side.

And meanwhile a dreadful rumor,
  From the battle plain,
Sped like lightning to the countess
  That her knight was slain.

When she heard the bitter tidings,
  She suppressed her moan,
But she hastened to her chamber
  There to weep alone.

Then a year in lonely sorrow,
  Hopeless tears she shed,
Till her father brought a suitor
  She was forced to wed.

But the chosen of her father
  Could not win her heart,
Sorrow thus was heaped on sorrow
  With redoubled smart.

To the marriage feast invited
  Came a countless throng,
With the trumpets joyous clangor
  Mingling shout and song.

Now around the jovial circle
  Flows the sparkling wine;
Cheeks are flushed and hearts are merry
  With its glow divine.

All are breathing joy and pleasure—
  All except the bride,
Silent, sorrowful and weary,
  At her husband's side.

Through the halls with angel voices
  Sweetest music floats,
And the louder harp resounding
  Blends its thrilling notes.

While its chords the singer dashes
  Like a rushing storm,
Sudden stands amid the circle
  Kuno's hero-form!

Kuno, long lamented hero!
  Dead supposed to be!
Kuno whom his lady never
  Hoped on earth to see!

All, while staring at each other
  Wondering silence kept,
As with courteous bow, and stately
  To the board he stept.

False and cruel was the rumor
  Of the hero's death,
Meant to grieve her heart who loved him
  To her latest breath.

Hastily they drop the wine-cup,
  From their seats they spring,
While his name is heard in thunder
  Through the halls to ring.

See she hastens, see she clasps him,
  Him, her own and best!
Folds him in convulsive rapture,
  Weeping on his breast!

Back she starts upon a sudden,
  At his feet she lies,
Pale in death her cheek forever,
  Dim in death her eyes!

FUNERAL RITES.

In what barbaric mind first originated the conception of the glass coffins, and plumed horses, and hearses, with which undertakers please their pockets, and disgust a sensible public. Can't one go to his grave without ostentation, though he may be a victim to it all his natural lifetime? In cases of public men these things may be permissible, though even then, to our taste, a plain simplicity were infinitely more desirable. No wonder that they who can ill afford the *miles of carriages*, which exhaust the orphan and widow's last sixpence, should follow an example the lack of which seems to be pronounced by those in authority in such matters, a want of proper respect to the dead. We should be glad could this foolish display be frowned down by those who are alone capable of putting an end to it, if not for the sake of common sense, at least for the sake of those who sorely need the funds thus expended.

FANNY FERN.

MAN AND WIFE QUARRELS.

It is often said that the most serious dissensions between married people take their rise in the most trifling and inconsiderable circumstances. The more refined and the better educated the parties are, the more extended will be the effect of their quarrels. The same impropriety that a pair of vulgar people would settle with two smoothing-irons and a broom-stick, will so estrange a gentleman and lady of refinement that nothing but a divorce can reconcile them, either to themselves or to society.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A FATHER writes to us as follows: "I am a married man, with two children, and have been living with my wife's folks since we were married—not that I wanted to do so, but my wife's mother would not let her go away from home, giving as an excuse that she was not well enough to leave home. Things went on smoothly until last Sunday, when our little girl was getting ready to go to Sunday school, and I said she should not go, and then we had a row. Now the whole case is, that my wife and I belong to different sects; she wanted the girl to go to her church, and I wanted her to go to mine. Then her mother steps up and says that I have got nothing to say about the children, or where they should go; and that they should never go to my church, and if I did not like that, I could clear out. Now, MR. EDITOR, what am I to do? I think I have as good a right to say where they should go as my wife has, and a *better* right than her mother. But they both say that I have got nothing to say, because I live with my mother-in-law. If you will give me an answer to this, through your correspondence, whether I had better clear out and leave them, or stay and fight it out, you will oblige me." Yours is certainly a very perplexing and painful case, and goes to show the soundness of the opinions we have frequently had occasion to give.—*First*, that it is not advisable for persons to intermarry who cherish radically different religious convictions and tenets; and *secondly*, that it is not advisable for a new-married couple to live with the parents of either, or to permit the parents of either to live with them. The violation of either of these rules is almost certain to bring trouble; and when both are violated, as in your case, domestic discord is inevitable. The first thing for you to do is to take up your abode in a home of your own, and then to exclude therefrom every outside influence. This being done, you and your wife can, by due exertion, come to an understanding about the religious training of your children. It would, of course, be not only foolish but impious for you and your wife to prate about "zeal for religion" and the "eternal welfare of your children's souls," *while you were quarrelling with each other*. Wrangling and contention are not religious rites, nor are domestic feuds and bickerings of Gospel growth, no matter what may be the *subject* of the disgraceful contest. If you and your wife are real, true-hearted Christians, you will be able to reconcile this unhappy difference in regard to your children; but if you belong to that numerous class with whom religion is a pretence and a sham, or a mere habit and tradition, you will probably go on quarrelling about what you call the "religious training" of your offspring, until your domestic peace becomes destroyed and your children's welfare wrecked.

L. K. C.—This correspondent wants to ventilate an idea. He declares that he has no sympathy with the extravagant doctrines of the self-constituted public champions of "women's rights;" that the theory that women may properly mingle in politics, practice law and administer justice, and are capable of filling all public positions now exclusively occupied by men, is simply absurd; but that it is not the less true that they are shouldered out of many occupations, for which they are eminently adapted, by the tougher sex. "It seems to us," continues our correspondent, assuming the royal and editorial plural, "that the absence of some thirty thousand of our young men at the seat of war must have left many business openings in New York, that could be and ought to be filled by women. Numbers of salesmen and clerks have left their situations and taken up arms for the maintenance of the Union. Many of them have left female relatives who are competent to take their places at the counter and the desk. Why should they not be permitted to fill the vacancies occasioned by the absence of their protectors? They have a double claim to the consideration of employers—first as women deprived of those upon whom they were dependent for support, and next, as the kindred of brave men who have enlisted in their country's service. We say give them employment in preference to men, in all cases where the work to be done is of a character adapted to their strength and mental capabilities. What does the LEDGER say about it?" The LEDGER says, let women have everything that they are justly entitled to, and as much more as you please. Whoever has employment to give, let him give it to some deserving woman, if he can find one that can do the work to his satisfaction, unless he should happen to prefer to employ a man—which, of course, he ought not to do, unless he has good reason for it.

CAMP-KETTLE.—There is no doubt that it is worth while to go to any reasonable expense in order to procure the best fire-arms. At the last official trial of muskets the value of the improved rifle-musket was demonstrated. A target was set up, which was composed of seasoned white pine boards, one inch thick, and placed an inch and a half apart. The old-fashioned musket, at the distance of two hundred yards, sent a ball through three of these boards; but the best rifle-musket now in use in our army drove a ball through *eleven* of them. The same terrible weapon, when tried at a distance of one thousand yards, sent a ball completely through a white pine plank three inches thick. A volley carefully aimed from such muskets would do great execution at the distance of three quarters of a mile. Let an army have a good battery of rifled cannon, and plenty of rifled muskets, and an enemy not having them must be disabled before he can get near enough to do any harm. By all means, let us have the best arms as fast as they can be obtained. Nevertheless, it is true, as you remark, that a hero with a bad weapon will generally vanquish a coward with a good one.

SERGEANT.—Pure ice two inches thick, will bear infantry if proper precautions are used. The men must not keep step when crossing thin ice, nor should a great multitude be on the ice at a time. Cavalry should never venture on ice less than four inches thick. Light artillery may be trusted on four-inch ice; but twelve-pounders require six inches, and twenty-four pounders eight inches. Ice eight inches thick will bear a thousand pounds to a square foot. On ice a foot thick an army may cross with all its guns and baggage, and without taking any but very obvious and ordinary care. All of which facts we of course state at second hand, and according to the "authorities," as we never had occasion to test the matters personally.

CORPORAL.—Your captain has no right to grant you leave of absence unless he is the commander of the post where you are stationed. The colonel of a regiment has power to grant furloughs to privates and non-commissioned officers as often as he thinks proper. But a captain, in no circumstances, can give leave of absence for more than twenty days, nor to more than two members of his company at the same time. With regard to commissioned officers, the commander-in-chief alone has power to grant them furloughs. See the Twelfth Article of War.

D. L.—It is affirmed by those who profess to know, that the oyster is a postdiluvian creature, consequently it is safe to suppose that Methusaleh never tasted of one during all the days of his long and probably not uneventful life. When the oyster first "came in," is not quite definitely settled; but that he is an "old settler," and most respectable in point of age, is admitted on all hands. The idea of "planting" oysters, which you consider so "very strange," is not at all strange to New Yorkers. There are large "plantations" of them all around us—the natives being brought from Virginia and Maryland.

SAMSON.—The iron-plates used for covering the hulls of the Gloire and Warrior are four inches and a half thick. Plates of that thickness are not only necessary, but they will prove insufficient unless supported by the strongest timbers. An Armstrong gun has driven a sixty-eight pound ball through four-inch iron and a supporting timber six inches thick. Even the Gloire and Warrior could, at length, be knocked to pieces by cannon balls, if, while the process was going on, *they* did not first knock to pieces the opposing ships or batteries.

HOWARD.—Chaplains in the army, before the present war began, were seldom employed as chaplains only. Thus, the chaplain at West Point was also professor of Geography, History and Moral Philosophy, with the pay of a professor. The chaplain at an ordinary post was required to serve as schoolmaster, with pay and emoluments equivalent to about one hundred dollars a month. A year ago it is said that there were only twenty army chaplains in the service.

L. D.—It is difficult for a pupil to make progress in music unless she have regular hours for practice and be allowed to pursue her studies without interruption. If you hold your daughter's music teacher responsible for her progress, you must permit her to follow his instructions. If, however, you prefer to take the matter entirely under your own control, and to be responsible for your daughter's success or failure, you of course can do so, and abide the consequences.

GEORGE puts the following question: "Is it ladylike for a girl to paint, and if she does so, how is she regarded?" That *ladies* do paint and have painted admits of no doubt; yet many have the credit of doing so, who never practice this foolish expedient for winning admiration. You should be quite sure of the fact before you condemn the lady for that which sensible people regard as a sign of great weakness.

UNION.—If you have hastily dismissed a friend "without cause," your most obvious way is to confess it and re[illegible]al him.

ONE WHO WANTS TO KNOW.—It is not an easy matter for anyone to determine whether or not the *English nation* would prefer to see this Republic disrupted and on the road to destruction. That there are many *Englishmen* who would be glad to see such an improbable event come to pass, there can be no doubt; and it is equally certain that there are many Britons who would deplore such an event as one of the greatest possible calamities; but how the nation, *as a nation*, stands affected toward us, it is perhaps impossible to ascertain. The "London Economist," in a recent issue, says: "we do not see why we should hesitate to declare our belief that the dissolution of the Union will prove a good to the world and to Great Britain." The reason given for such a belief is stated to be the fact that we have grown to be too powerful and self-conceited, too arrogant and aggressive, and that no nation would much longer be safe from our insolence and rapacity. In plain terms, the "London Economist" and those whom it represents *are afraid of us*, and so would be glad to see us weakened and destroyed. And this, we imagine, is the key to all foreign wishes for the dissolution of the Union, by whomsoever they may be entertained. On the contrary, those Europeans, of whatever nation, who sympathize with the *people* of the earth and care more for the welfare of the many than for the aggrandizement of the few, who place humanity above money and care more for human beings than for cheap manufactures and unlimited markets, earnestly desire the perpetuity of this Republic and hope to see it grow in wealth, power and grandeur until its greatness shall overshadow all the despotisms of the earth.

J. C.—It is useless for old people to attempt to crush the romance out of young hearts. *It cannot be done.* All boys and girls have essentially the same heart experiences; and it may safely be said that, under like degrees of enlightenment, the human heart is always and everywhere the same. In fact, so far as matters of love and the romantic notions of lovers are concerned, it is believed by those who have given the subject particular attention and have analyzed the phenomena connected therewith, that lovers of almost every degree of cultivation generally exhibit the same kind of symptoms and pass through similar emotional experiences. You might as well attempt to kill your children's appetite for food, as to extinguish that mighty and universal hunger of the human heart for the blessedness of loving and the luxury of being loved. With here and there an exception, every girl looks forward with the most pleasant anticipations to a home in which she shall be the presiding divinity; and in like manner, nearly every young man has visions of a prospective paradise, cheered by a fairest Eve, holding in her gentle hand the invisible Jacob's ladder whereby he may mount into very heaven. So, instead of trying to crush out all such "notions" from the minds and hearts of your children, you should try to direct and enlighten them in such manner as will enable them to choose wisely and to secure such domestic happiness as may be possible for them.

INQUIRER.—The proclamation of President Lincoln, in which he commanded the confederates to disperse, and which, *you* say, they laughed at, was in strict accordance with the well-known law of 1795, which *obliges* the President, before employing a military force to suppress an insurrection, to command the insurgents to retire peaceably to their homes. Without having complied with this provision of the law, all the subsequent acts of the President would have been unlawful. If the individuals named by you laughed at that part of the proclamation, they exhibited more ignorance than courage by so doing. And so with regard to the other case mentioned in your letter. The President was sworn to execute the *laws*. Now, Congress had passed a law confiscating slaves actually employed upon the enemy's works, *and no others*. If others are to be confiscated or set free, it is not the President or a general who must do it, but Congress.

TENTH WARD.—Chain shot is two balls connected together by a chain a foot or two in length. It is of use in cutting up the rigging of an enemy's ship, but its value is much diminished by the impossibility of directing its course with accuracy. Canister shot is just what its name imports, a tin canister full of bullets, which, being discharged from a gun, breaks and scatters the shot in every direction. Sometimes stones, pieces of old iron, chunks of glass, &c., are put in the canisters. Grape-shot is a bunch of small shot confined in a canvas bag, forming a kind of cylinder, whose diameter is equal to that of the ball adapted to the cannon. These shot of course tear out of the bag, when they leave the mouth of the cannon, and spread far apart, whereby they are rendered much more destructive than a single ball would be.

JUSTICE.—The good people of Brooklyn would hardly assent to your remark, that New York and Brooklyn are one and the same city. They are decidedly of the opinion, that Brooklyn is Brooklyn. Besides being separated from New York by a deep and rapid stream and a distinct government, Brooklyn has a character all its own—an aspect, tone and style quite as different from those of New York as if it were a hundred miles distant. With regard to Baltimore, there is no doubt that it ranks as the fourth city in the Union. We have never been guilty of the folly of be-rating a large and intelligent metropolis merely because a few disorderly persons happen to live in it. We have twenty thousand special reasons for thinking well of Baltimore, all of which are recorded in our books.

BOY.—The reason why red-hot balls do not ignite the charge of the gun is, that between the powder and the ball a thick wadding of soft clay or wet hay is placed. The cannon is, of course, discharged as soon as possible after it is loaded, but if it is loaded properly, military men say the ball may remain in the piece till it is cold without igniting the powder. Balls are heated in furnaces built for the purpose, which usually heat sixty at once, and will make a twenty-four pound shot red hot in twenty-five minutes. Hot shot will always set fire to wood work if they do not penetrate more than a foot; but as it takes several minutes for them to produce a blaze, it is not difficult to quench the fire if it is taken in time.

M. R.—If the agreement which your neighbor made to buy your house and lot was not put in writing and signed by you, you cannot enforce it. The statute requires every agreement for the sale of lands, or for the sale of any interest in lands, to be put in writing and to be *subscribed by the seller*. The writing need not be a formal contract; a simple memorandum, stating the consideration, or price, to be paid by the purchaser, will suffice; and without such a written memorandum, so subscribed, the agreement is void, and of course an agreement that is void cannot be enforced by the instrumentalities of the law.

CONCILIATION.—A girl who speaks slightingly to others of the young man she has promised to marry, must be of defective organization, so contrary to nature is such conduct. We would not have behavior of that kind seriously resented, but, most assuredly, the young man should not entrust his happiness and honor to the keeping of such a girl. She is either an idiot or a consummate hypocrite. Women who do not love their accepted lovers should have *self-love* enough to speak of them with decency.

LIEUTENANT.—The best Paris-made cavalry swords, with plain steel scabbards, can now be bought in this city, by retail, at ten dollars each; the same with gilt scabbards, thirteen dollars each. The full-dress, regulation cavalry hat for a lieutenant, costs twelve dollars. The price is absurd, because the hat is. A better hat could be easily devised which could be sold for four dollars. An uglier thing than the new cavalry hat we never saw on even a soldier's head.

L. W. wants to know if persons who were lovers in youth, but who have both been now long years married to other parties, should treat each other as friends or strangers, when they meet. That depends upon their moral integrity. If they can meet as friends, and still remain loyal to their other, and *more binding engagements*, let them do so.

LIEUTENANT C. T.—The loss of the American army at the battle of Buena Vista was 277 killed and 408 wounded. The number of our troops engaged was 517 regulars and 4,400 volunteers. At Cerro Gordo we had 8,500 men engaged, and lost 99 killed and 353 wounded. At the taking of the city of Mexico we had 8,304 men, and lost 188 killed and 673 wounded.

TOLEDO.—If your son has been regularly mustered into the service of the United States, it is not probable that you can get his discharge on the ground that he is a minor and enlisted without your knowledge or consent. Such attempts have frequently been made, without success.

MAGGIE.—"One of my schoolmates," dolefully writes MAGGIE, "has cut me out with my lover. What shall I do to win him back?" Nothing at all. A fellow who could be so easily weaned from you, is not worth winning back. Dismiss him from your mind.

HENGIST.—If you force your neighbor into a lawsuit, about the grapes which his son took from your vine, you will stand a chance of running up a large bill of expense for your trouble.

ALMIRA.—It is neither proper nor becoming for a young lady to cuff a man's ears in sport, and romp and scuffle with him. Such conduct is immodest and vulgar.

PENN YAN.—Advising a soldier to desert is a punishable offence.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*